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SPIRITUAL WIVES.

VOL. I.

William Hepworth Dixon.

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1868.

SPIRITUAL WIVES.

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BY

WILLIAM HEPWORTH DIXON.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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Second Edition.

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PREFACE.

THE subject opened in these pages is so far new, that scarcely any of the facts are to be found in books. Man in his higher phase has hardly come within the grasp of science, and the histories which shall illustrate his spiritual passions have yet to be compiled. One chapter, in one such history, is diffidently offered in the present work.

I have collected my facts in distant places; in the Baltic provinces, in the West of England, on the shores of Lake Ontario, in the New England cities. In every case, I have seen the people and the places for myself. The names of many persons who have helped me will appear in the text: there are others of whom I would gladly speak, but may not.

The strange paper by Professor Sachs, which I give in the original, as the chief evidence used against Archdeacon Ebel in the great trials here

recounted, was sealed up by order of the Royal Court of Berlin, as a document affecting persons of high rank. How that paper came into my hands, I must not say; it is authentic and complete; for that I pledge my word; and if either the authenticity or the completeness of this paper shall come to be challenged by any one having the right to do so, I may then be in a position to require, and obtain, permission to tell the story of how it appears in these pages.

6 St. James's Terrace,
New Year's Day, 1868.

NOTE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

From this edition I have removed a few errors of the press, errors of no great importance to the sense; only blots on the book as a work of art.

January 18th, 1868.

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SPIRITUAL WIVES.

CHAPTER I.

THE JUNKER HOF.

CHRISTUS kommt!

Gott sei Dank! Christus kommt!

A man might have fancied that such pious cries as,—

Lo! He comes!

God be praised!

He comes! He comes!!

would hardly be considered by a Christian magistrate, living in a German city, in the present year of grace, as likely, even when raised by a mob of boys and girls in a public street, to have been raised against the King and that King's peace. A man might have fancied that a brave soldier, his brow entwined with laurel-leaves, would hardly think it needful to put such cries to the

ban; still less to stay them by a charge of that splendid force, which only a year ago gave liberty and unity to Central Europe, by breaking through the Kaiser's lines at Königgrätz. But such was not the view of his duty taken by General Vogel von Falkenstein, when these pious words, and other pious words like these, were shouted by a crowd of citizens and students in the Hof Gasse and adjoining streets of insular Königsberg last week.

Vogel von Falkenstein is one of those ready soldiers whom Father Fritz would have cuffed and hugged,—one of the Homeric heroes of the Seven-days' War. Schleswig knew him; Hanover and Frankfort know him. King George and Prince Alexander had to deal with him, poor fellows! Last year his hand lay heavy on the Hebrew dealers in gold and scrip; but his sword was not more swift to smite the dubious city-friend and angry foe in open field, than it was prompt to crush, in case there should have been call for force, both the pious believers and the wicked scoffers who met last Monday in the Junker Hof, to announce and to dispute the immediate Advent of our Lord. He is one of those chiefs who like to have it said of them that they stand no nonsense. I dare say

that, as a good man and true conservative, Falkenstein has no wish to stand in the way of a Second Advent; but, as a soldier, commanding the King's troops in Ost and West Preussen, he has to think above all things of the public peace. If Christ must come again, he seems to be of opinion that His coming should take place in-doors, with awe and discipline, not in the open streets, with a riot of citizen shouts and student brawls. Anyhow, on Monday night, these good folks of the Amber City saw how soon a line of rifles, borne by strong arms, and rattling over the Krämer bridge and down the Hof Gasse on the double, could put an end to the cry of "Christus kommt!" in the public street.

But how came a company of Prussian infantry, serving under the flag of Vogel von Falkenstein, to be drawn up in line against students and citizens who were simply crying out for the Second Advent of our Lord?

Early in the present month of November, 1867, a few words in the corner of a news-sheet told these students of Königsberg, that three religious services were about to be held on fixed evenings in the Junker Hof, the City-hall; that during these services the impending personal Advent of our

Lord would be announced; that the true way of preparing men for this dread event would be made known. The doors were to be open at seven, the seats were to be free.

No name was given. No witnesses were called. In the city it was whispered that these meetings were being got up by men of some weight, supported by the higher powers, who knew what they were doing, though it might not suit their policy to speak out. In Schöneberg's Wine-stube,—that den of the Lang Gasse in which the great shippers and factors of Königsberg eat caviare and discuss the news about one o'clock,—these meetings were said to have a political end in view, and to have been originally planned in the secret bureaux of Geheimrath Wagener in Berlin. In the University you heard another tale. In the class-room and under the portico it was known that the Prophet of this new dispensation was a young man who had received his education and his doctor's degree at Königsberg, who had filled with high promise a Professor's chair at Marburg, and was giving up his career for the sake of his belief in things unseen. The students called him a fool.

Things have so turned out, that this shred of

notice in the public papers has made a great stir in the Amber Land.

In the first place, these people of Königsberg, piquing themselves, among many nobler merits, on being the modern Athenians, love to spend their time in asking after some new thing; and here, in the announcement of a coming Christ, they have found something that is both new and strange. In the second place, winter has come down finally on their streets and quays, locking up their ships in ice, so that for months to come they will have scarcely anything either to do or say, except smoke in the Exchange, sledge through the snow, read the telegrams from London, and bet on that distant day in the coming spring when the ice will break and their ships get away. In the third place, the harvest has been bad, the rate of wages low, the supply of wheat and tares scanty; in consequence of these calamities the shippers are in ill-luck, the artisans out of work, and the peasants short of bread: all of which trials have a tendency to inflame the heart, to make men weary of life, and to open their fancies to the promise of a change. In the fourth place, such a thing as an evening religious service, given on a working day of the week, is all but unknown in these Prussian cities, where the

churches are government offices, the preachers are police magistrates, and the services are governed by rules as stern as the articles of war. In the last place : . . . Stay! The full effect of what should be said in the fifth place can be only felt when the story on which we are about to enter has been told.

Yes, those few words of announcement in the news-sheet have made a very great stir; and such a crowd of people as gathered in the Junker Hof on Monday night to hear this prophet has not been known in Königsberg for many years. The Junker Hof, answering to our own Guildhall, is not, under ordinary circumstances, a desert place. Here the great merchants hold their balls; the great bankers spread their boards. Here the political battles of the town and province are fought out. Here the Rev. Dr. Julius Rupp delights a fashionable audience by his eloquence; and Dr. Jolowicz discourses to a body of reforming Jews. Any great singer who may wander into Ost Preussen is heard in the Junker Hof. The hall belongs to the city, and the use of it is only to be obtained from the town-council; but, in fact, the use of it is seldom refused when the applicants are of standing in the place. In the same

room Johann Jacoby dilates to the democracy on the rights of man; and Karl Rosenkranz whispers to the higher classes on the charms of philosophy and art. I have been invited to an evening party, given in this hall, by the foreign Consuls, to the cream of the cream, where the young ladies dance and flirt, while the older people drink tea and play at whist. In a word, everything that happens in Königsberg happens in the Junker Hof.

But on scarcely any of these festive and solemn occasions has a crowd been drawn into the place like that which the few lines announcing a discourse on the immediate coming of our Lord drew into this hall on Monday night.

Before the doors were yet thrown open, a crowd of men and women, from all classes of society, had filled the street in which the Junker Hof stands, and which is called, from it, the Hof Gasse. The night was chill and raw; much snow had fallen; and the town was shivering in the second of its seven winters; that is to say, in the season of snow and slush, when six or eight inches of biting slop lies everywhere on the ground. Each woman who could afford them had snow-shoes on her feet, and fur tippets round her neck. Almost every man had a cap made of sealskin, a coat

lined with sealskin, a pair of leggings topped with sealskin. All the seals in Spitzbergen might have been flayed in order to keep these richer believers warm. Many of the poorer sort of people were muffled in rugs and shawls; none were in rags; rags being unknown in this region of sleet and slush, where he who is but thinly clad soon dies of the frost, and is put away out of sight. When the doors were thrown open, as many of the mob as stood near them tore up the broad stairs, pushed through the wide ante-rooms, seized upon the luxurious chairs and sofas; men and women rushing on, eager and shouting, to their seats, pell-mell. In one minute the hall was filled; in another minute the three large ante-rooms were also filled; while the broad staircase, dropping to the street below, was packed with human beings still fighting to get in; and a vast crowd of late-comers behind them choked up the Hof Gasse, and rendered the adjoining streets, called the Magister Gasse and the Brodbänken Strasse, impassable to a sledge.

When filled by such a crowd of men in furs and gabardines, of women in muffs and cuffs, the Junker Hof is a scenic room; its bright fittings and airy decorations coming out into very sharp

contrast with the sombre dress and keen expression of the audience which fills its chairs. The room is large and nobly planned, as becomes the birth-place of German liberalism, the cradle (as it boasts) of the new Fatherland. It is somewhat like the larger room in King Street, and is used for many of the same things as Willis's Rooms; that is to say, for costly banquets, exclusive balls, and high political meetings; but the Junker Hof is lighter in tone, richer in colour, than our own fashionable lounge. The walls are rough with gods and nymphs, with busts of heroes, kings, and poets. Two large candelabra hang from the roof. Apollo smiles from the ceiling, on which he is reclining, in bright-red paint, his lyre in hand, with Mercury and Aurora in attendance on his godship.

The room being full of people, it seemed useless for the Prophet of Doom to wait for such a carnal trifle as the hour announced in his call.

A servant lit a few more lights; then, a young-looking man, very much like a banker's cashier, walked up to the reading-desk, and lit two candles. A certain shock seemed to pass through the nerves of his audience, as this young man blew out his taper and laid it down. He, it seemed, was the Prophet. In a clear voice, sweet

in tone, and wide in compass, he breathed above our heads the familiar words :

Lasst uns beten—Let us pray !

What force had sent that thrill through my neighbours' nerves ? Did the man's voice and mien recal to them the scenery and the action of some by-gone tale ?

CHAPTER II.

AN ANGEL'S MESSAGE.

THE Prophet of Doom was not a man of the pictorial kind. In garb, in build, in face—in everything, perhaps, except eye and voice—he seemed to be rather a nice, respectable, young man; such as a common-place girl would like in a lover, and a sober merchant would engage as a clerk. My first glimpse of him was puzzling; for in a city full of pictorial people, he was just such a man as you would find in every office in Lombard Street. In age, he appeared to be no more than thirty, though his actual years were forty-two. His face was dark; but dark with the luminous bronze of a southern clime. Nothing in his colour, in his mien, suggested a German origin; yet he had little about him, beyond his dark eyes and features, that implied either Lettish or Wendish blood. The absence of all hair from his chin and lip marked him out for notice in

that congregation of bearded men. His locks were cropped close, and parted down the side of his head in the true English style; and he wore the flat kind of whisker which is known to old dandies in Pall Mall as a mutton-chop. On the whole, this Prophet of Wrath had to my eyes the perfectly familiar, but in no way pictorial, appearance of a London clerk.

I was not surprised to hear that his name was Diestel—Thistle.

To many of my neighbours in the hall—most of whom, let me say, were girls and women—the prim locks, the mutton-chop whiskers, the staid frock-coat, and the Byronic collar, being less like things of every day, appeared far more touching and majestic than to myself. In the course of a long sitting, and after it was over, I heard many odd things about the new Prophet; but not one word was said in my hearing about his prim and ordinary look.

"The Doctor," growled a dark man at my elbow, "is a conservative and a feudalist. Ugh!"

"He is an Angel of Light, one of Privy Councillor Wagener's Angels of Light," said a Polish Jew, who seemed to know all about him.

"An Angel of Light?" put in a lady near us.

"Yes, well," said the Jew, "you know his father was an Angel among the Ebelians; the son is an Angel among the Irvingites: it is just the same."

"If he is one of Geheimrath Wagener's Angels of Light, he is no friend to democracy," scowled the first speaker.

Privy Councillor Wagener, I should say, is a very high tory in Prussia; being Graf von Bismarck's chief adviser in home affairs; yet so stiff a conservative that he looks down upon Graf von Bismarck as little less than a red republican. This gentleman (known to all the world as having once been editor of the Kreuz Zeitung, and as now being chief of the Junker party), like all the high-Church politicians in Prussia, has a strong tendency towards the mystic in his religious life. Of late years he has joined the most mystical of the many Pietist churches, which go in Prussia under the common, but highly opprobrious, name of MUCKER—that of the Irvingites; in which religious society he has attained the rank of an Archangel. In this branch of the Mucker society, the Reverend Doctor Diestel, now in Königsberg, announcing the immediate coming of our Lord, is an Angel of light.

"An Angel!" pondered the lady near me; "yes, he looks well descended and angel-like."

Hearing these words, I glanced at him again. There he stood; a prim young man, with a dark face, a frock-coat, a Byronic collar, and a mutton-chop whisker; looking like anything on earth except a cherub. Yet she may have been right. In Lithuania people see more angels and spirits in a week than we Londoners are privileged to see in a lifetime. So they ought to know an angel when they see one. I will only add, that if the Reverend Doctor Diestel is like an angel, Guercino's models were very badly chosen.

When the messenger opened his lips in prayer, he fixed the eye and held the breath of every one in that rapt and eager crowd; exercising this power upon his audience even more by his way of speaking, than by the solemnity of his message.

Lasst uns beten—Let us pray!

The young man raised his eyes towards the figures of Apollo and Aurora, and asked, in a tone of strong emotion, that a blessing might rest on what he was about to say, and that the truth might find an entrance into all Christian hearts.

A sigh on the part of some, a sob on the part

of many, responded to his warm appeal at the throne of grace.

"Why not into *all* hearts?" said a voice near me. The speaker was a Jew; a learned, tolerant, and famous Jew; one who belongs to the reforming synagogue in Königsberg, and to the advancing liberal party in Ost Preussen; a man who thinks much of his own ancient faith, yet more of the natural rights and civil equalities of men. I could not answer him; but some of his furred and tippeted neighbours scowled on his question with a fierceness of sudden wrath, that told me how welcome in this city might be a mandate of some new Father Fritz, which should command the police to strip and flay a Jew for presuming to wear a beard.

The Prophet took the Bible into his hand; and turning the leaves, as though it were by chance, he fixed his gaze on the twenty-fourth chapter of St. Matthew's gospel; and then read out slowly, with keen dramatic art, that portion which relates to the impending desolation of the Holy City, to the wars and rumours of wars which were to come, to the great tribulation in the churches, to the appearance of many false Messiahs, who should work signs and wonders, so as almost to deceive

the very elect, to the darkening of the sun and moon, and to the final coming of the Son of Man.

He was a very fine reader; with many a rapid rush, with many a subtle pause, he drove the meaning of this sombre prophecy of desolation home into his hearer's soul. With what force and awe he read the words—"Then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn; and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven in power and great glory, and he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other!" In Luther's German version, the effect of this passage is even finer than it is in the English version, and the accomplished actor made the most of his magnificent text. Loud sobs and cries went up from five hundred breasts.

When he had closed the book, he paused for a moment to let his words sink deep into our minds; then, spreading out his hands above our heads, he told us what the text which he had just been reading meant. These words of Christ, he said, were sent to *us*. Now was the time foreseen by prophets from of old. Jesus looked down from the Mount of Olives—upon what? Upon the Temple and the Temple-courts; works which had

been designed by Herod, continued by Archelaus, and all but completed, under Pontius Pilate, by the high-priests Annas and Caiaphas. They were mighty labours, on which the noblest art of Greece was being lavished. Yet what did the Lord, in His last hours, say of these efforts of human pride? He said the stones should be thrown down, so that not one stone should be left standing upon another. Why did the Lord denounce this Temple? Because it was a sign of things which were then — which are now — an abomination in the sight of God. Because it was the substitution of a material fact for a spiritual truth. Because it proffered to Heaven a shrine of marble in the stead of an obedient heart. Because it was a dwelling for the earthly gods, not a home for the Lord of light and life. And now, in our own day, is not that of which Herod's Temple was a type fulfilled in our midst? Have we not made a god of our material good? Are we not poor in grace, poor in obedience, poor in ideality? Ask the magistrate, ask the prince. Do we not give more thought to buying and selling, to getting and saving, than we give to the salvation of our souls? Who cares for his soul? Who knows that he has a soul? We sow wheat, we plant timber, we load

ships, we find amber; but who among us takes any heed for his eternal wants? who loves to obey? who puts himself at the lowest seat? who repeats to his own heart daily the saying of our Lord, that he who is highest in God's kingdom is the servant of all? You dread the winter frost, yet act as though you felt no fear of the nether fires! Is not this blindness of the soul a sign? Are not our palaces and gardens simply doubles of the Temple and Temple-court? Shall they not be thrown down in the day of wrath?

The speaker paused; a very long time he paused. Then he raised his eyes to heaven and said:

"Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away!"

Another pause; then a quick cry, as of mingled joy and triumph, came from his lips:

"Christus kommt!"

Men sighed and women wept. Hundreds of quivering voices answered to the preacher's cry with "Christus kommt!"

Now, said the Angel of Light, waxing warmer in his fury, is the time for Him to appear among us. Now or never! now or never! Voltaire had said, in his own bad time, that the religion of

Christ could not last for twenty years longer; the French infidel had turned out to be a false prophet; but he (the reverend doctor) had it upon his soul to declare that if our Lord should not come *now*, He would never come at all. Were not the Scriptures now fulfilled? Was the time not ripe? Did not He say that He would come in the day of tribulation, in the day of false teachers, in the day of war and strife, in the day of famine, pestilence, and earthquakes? Did not He promise His disciples that He would return when nations were rising against nations, and kingdoms against kingdoms? Did not He foretell, as He sat on the Mount of Olives, that in the day of wrath, on the eve of judgment, His people would have to suffer afflictions, that many of them would be led astray, and that the faithful few would be hated of the world for His sake? Had not all these sayings come to be true at this present hour? Yea; they had come to pass. Yea; now was the time! Now was the great day! now!

Christus kommt!

Many strong men sobbed aloud; many weak women swooned and fainted. Hundreds of voices shouted with the glowing angel:

Christus kommt!

Gott sei Dank! Christus kommt!

This cry was taken up by crowds in the outer rooms, on the stairs, in the streets below. Here and there a scowl, a word of insult, perhaps a menacing gesture, greeted the speaker's eloquence.

"He is a tool of the conservatives," you might hear some radical growl.

"He has friends at the Schloss, no doubt," said another.

"Wagener sent him to Königsberg," put in a third, whose fear was evidently father to his faith.

In vain the Prophet tried to finish his discourse. On this side sobs and groans, on that side sneers and yells, prevented his voice being further heard. The people could bear no more. Roused by his fervid phrases, many of his audience were in hysterics, still more were blind with tears and hoarse with shouting. Then, in a few last words, the Prophet was understood to say that, although the Lord was about to judge the world, He would not come in a visible shape. Christ would come in glory and in power, but not, as the Jews expected, and as the vulgar think, with horses and chariots, with banners and swords. God could not be seen by man unless He took

upon Himself the burden of our flesh. The new advent will be in the spirit.

He ended; and the people in the Junker Hof cried:

Christus kommt!

Gott sei Dank! Christus kommt!

A short prayer was said; a hymn was read out, not sung; the lights were lowered, and the people were told to leave. But the people could not get away, the outer room and the stairs being choked with hearers, whilst the streets below the window were filled with tumult, through the pauses in which could be heard the clash of steel and the tramp of armed men.

CHAPTER III.

SERAPHIM KISSES.

THE scene outside the Junker Hof had been more exciting and tumultuous than the scene within.

Some hundreds of students had come down from the University; in the first place, because they had been told that this night meeting had a secret purpose—was, in fact, a blow directed against the democratic movement of our times in Prussia; in the second place, because they wanted to see, with their own eyes, the fool who had given up a Professor's chair—that throne of which a German student dreams by night and thinks by day—in order to run about the world announcing the personal Advent of our Lord.

Many of these youngsters, having come down from the Altstadt, in which the colleges stand, rather late, had not been able to force a way into the hall, and finding the streets round the

Junker Hof full of people, shut out, like themselves, in the perishing November night, they began to sing and shout, to rush and reel, and to play a thousand of their student pranks. The groups were much excited, and nothing was easier than to make a row.

"What is it all about, my masters?" asked a Jew tradesman of these young fellows.

"What is it all about?" said the merry lad: "it is a great thing, they are doing in there," pointing up at the lighted windows: "they are roasting a Jew; they are making a new religion; will you join it, eh, Isaac?"

Joining in the sport, the Jew asked the lad, in the low Dutch spoken by his class:

"Wat kann ich mir davor koofe?" (As we should say—What can I get by it?)

The group of students broke into a laugh; and the cry ran down the Hof Gasse; the young folks without responding to the cry within of "Christus kommt!" by the ludicrous shout of "Wat kann ich mir davor koofe?"

As the crowd pressed more and more about the entrance, hoping to get in from the winter cold, these youths became more and more wild in conduct. In the Amber City, as in every other

University, from Oxford to Moscow, there is a latent feud between town and gown; less hot here, perhaps, than in most places; still warm enough: hatred on one side, scorn on the other; just that sort of feeling which opens out most freely into tiff and strife. In Königsberg, this feud is not merely a war of youth against years, of class against class, as in Oxford and Cambridge, but of science against commerce, of liberalism against conservatism. The students of Königsberg represent the new German ideas, while the citizens represent, more or less closely, the old Prussian spirit. The students laugh at the town-folk, as a bony, stupid, slavish people, who know nothing about art and philosophy, who care for little beyond toiling for their daily mess, and fighting for their king. What is seen among ourselves in Oxford, is here found existing in reverse. With us, learning is mostly feudal, commerce mostly liberal; in Königsberg, learning is mostly radical, while commerce is very often feudal. Here the University is far more democratic than the city.

Each section of this society has a tale of scorn which it tells against the other. Here, under his portico in the Altstadt, you will hear from some Herr Professor, in the midst of gibes and sneers, that when Graf von Bismarck, in the sum-

mer of last year, made his great appeal to the country, giving every lout in the province a vote, the rabble of Ost Preussen refused to accept his gift, on the ground that they had never had votes under their good old kings. On being told by the Prefect that their lord desired them to make use of these votes, and send some one, possessing their confidence, to speak for them in the Parliament at Berlin, they wrote the King's name on their balloting papers, and then tossed them into the box. On being further told by the Prefect that they could not vote for the King, since his Majesty was not a candidate for election in their city, they asked for fresh papers, and wrote on them the Crown Prince's name. Nobody, you will be assured under the portico, could induce these loyal people to put their trust in a common man. Under the smoky roof of Wolff's Wine-stube in the Lang Gasse—the high street of traffic—you will see how quickly the tables can be turned against these jesters. There you would hear of Jewish students who, in the bad old days, were ready to give up Moses and the synagogue for a Professor's chair; to change their names, and to deny their circumcision, for three hundred thalers a-year. The need for these acts of sacrifice has been done away; but

the old sentiment remains in part. When a burgher is vexed, you may still hear him describe a Jew—most of all a reformed Jew—as a rascal, only a little less vile than a Pole. Pious people in Germany usually speak of students as sons of Belial; as young men who mock at loyalty and disparage valour, and whose Satanic creed may be summed up in their own scandalous motto: No King and no God.

In Königsberg, there is less of this scorn and hate than in most places, since the students are mostly from the city and the province. Still the class feeling of the University men is strong. Thus, it is a daily jest with the radical and free-thinking youths to say that many of these money-making citizens are given up, beyond hope, to piety, loyalty, and other superstitions. They laugh at them for believing in princes, in angels, and in devils. They deride their proneness to indulge in spiritual language and in spiritual qualms; to tremble at the thought of a ghost; and to expect mystical admonitions of the day of doom. Hence, the zest with which these youngsters rushed into the sport of worrying the poor souls who had turned out from their warm rooms on a wintry night to hear what the young

prophet had to say about the impending Advent of our Lord.

The fun grew fast and fierce. To every cry from within the Junker Hof these madcaps answered by derisive shouts. When the believers sighed, they groaned; when the sinners sobbed, they yelled and screamed. One noisy fellow got upon the stairs, from which he passed the word of command to his companions in the street. The reverend doctor has a searching voice; his louder tones could be heard through the double windows; and when in his eloquent fury he cried out, "Christus kommt!" they cheered him with a loud ironical roar of "Christus hoch! Christus hoch!"

Nor was this rudeness on the part of these young men the worst. Bent on yet rougher mischief, gangs of students formed into close files, and began their game of wedging through the crowd; hustling the men, chaffing the women; trampling on people's feet and dragging off their clothes. The night was cold, the street was wet. The crowd swayed to and fro; stamping, chafing, passionate; and when it was seen that no more persons could find room within the walls, the whole body of students who had been left outside began to join their fellows in rushing and pushing, in screeching

and yelling. They tore a way into the dense masses of people; bonneting the men, pulling the women about. Girls who were pretty they caught and kissed, crying, "Seraphim kisses! Seraphim kisses!" Those women who could get away ran home; but many of the insulted creatures could not free themselves from the crowd. The men who had come with them to the meeting either fought with their tormentors, or struggled to carry them away. Still, the young men pushed in and out of the crowd, crying, "Give me a kiss; a Seraphim kiss; only a Seraphim kiss!"

A hundred battles took place in the narrow street under the Junker Hof windows. Shawls were torn, and caps were lost. Kisses were freely stolen. "Mucker hoch! Gott sei Dank! Seraphim kisses!" screamed the laughing fellows as they rushed and pushed. In vain the police came down to control the pother and clear the street. Some of the students, seized in the act of hugging and kissing women, were instantly rescued by their fellows. When the policemen drew their swords the people laughed, for they knew that no officer of police would charge upon these madcaps, many of whom were the sons of counts and barons. The officer made a rapid retreat from the narrow

Hof Gasse towards the open space called the Coal Market, on the Pregel bank, whence he sent up a messenger to the commanding General's residence in the Ross-garten for help.

While the police were falling back on the Coal Market, the service in the Junker Hof came to an end. The hot and excited people who had been inside poured down into the street; and the students, setting up fresh shouts of "Seraphim kisses! Seraphim kisses!" pressed upon the new female victims, took them by the arms, and kissed them on the face, in the presence of their struggling fathers and outraged husbands. Struck by these angry men, the students pushed and fought, and fought and pushed, keeping their good humour to the last under many a stinging blow. The whole quarter of the Kneiphof (a quarter corresponding to the City in Paris) was in a state of riot. Those who were quitting the hall ran back. Ladies hid themselves in vaults, in closets, and in upper rooms. Some of the students would have forced their way in, to deliver the Seraphim kisses in the hall itself; but a band of stout citizens planted their feet in the doorway, and all the madcaps' efforts in swaying and driving could not force an entrance through this sturdy guard.

In a few minutes the messenger reached the Ross-garten in the Upper Town, when some such words as these (I have been told) were rapidly exchanged between the great soldier and one of his aides-de-camp.

"What is all this ado?"

"General, the preacher Diestel, has been declaring in the Junker Hof that Christus is about to come."

"Very, well."

"A great crowd has gathered in the narrow streets of the Kneiphof, and a breach of the peace has occurred."

"Well, where are the police?"

"On the spot, General, but too weak to act."

"Send off a company of the guard. Tell the captain to clear the streets and bring in the rioters."

In five minutes these quick orders had been given and obeyed. The guards were rattling down the street towards the Krämer bridge, and the aide-de-camp was standing once more by his illustrious chief.

"Who are these folks?"

"Some say, General, they are the Mucker; I know the students think so."

"H'm!"

"That, General, is the reason why the students have raised their favourite cries of Seraphim Küssen!' and Mucker hoch!"

"In that case," said the General . . . and after thinking the matter over for a moment, he lit a fresh cigar.

The troops went rattling on the double by the Pregel bridge into the Kneiphof, the disputed quarter; drew up in the Coal Market; formed into line, and marched down the Hof Gasse, clearing it as they went along. In a few seconds the street was free, and a dozen students were in close arrest. Now the police came back upon the scene, and the ladies who had been hiding in upper rooms, in vaults, and closets, were taken by the hand, muffled up in furs and cloaks, and carried to their homes.

By twelve o'clock the Hof Gasse was itself again, sloppy, silent, and forsaken; the Angel of Light had disappeared, no one knew whither; the soldiers had gone back to the Upper Town; and the madcap students were repenting in the watch-house.

What was it all about? Why had these youngsters hugged and kissed the women? What is the meaning of a Seraphim kiss, and of the students' favourite cry? What is a Mucker?

To know such things you must first know

Königsberg, the Amber City; for Königsberg is the cradle of those singular bodies which in Heidelberg, Halle, Hamburg, Elberfeld, as well as in Berlin and Dresden, call themselves the Conservative and Revival Churches, but which radicals and rationalists brand with the insulting name of Mucker.

CHAPTER IV.

THE AMBER CITY.

KÖNIGSBERG, King's Hill, the capital of Ost Preussen, is a city of peculiar situation and peculiar genius. The first fact about it to strike a stranger is its extraordinary isolation. An old saying puts the case that the Amber City should be to its people all in all, since it lies, not only out of Germany, but out of the world. "A good place for wolves," was Father Fritz's verdict on the royal and sacred city in which he had come to be crowned.

In Fritz's time, Königsberg stood in a far-off corner of the Baltic Sea, five hundred miles from Potsdam, in a dreary waste of scrub and ice, which it had cost him a ten-days' ride to reach. The city was seldom open, even to the sea. In summer the roads were choked with sand, in winter they were lost in snow. Old men can yet recall a time when the mail-coach from Berlin spent seven long

days and nights on the road. Even now, although the roads have been vastly improved during late years, the wastes are so wide, the tracks so faint, that either a shower of rain or a fall of snow suffices to shut up parts of the country.

Yet this city in the northern desert is wont to pique itself on many fine things; not without reason for its pride; since, while it has every right to claim the rank of a royal town, it can lay some claims to the honour of having been the true birthplace of German freedom, unity, and independence.

In Frankfort, in Gotha, perhaps in Berlin, this plea for the Amber City may be derided and rejected; the New Germany being wisely jealous of her national growth; and this city of Königsberg happening to stand upon Lettish, not upon German soil. But, under yon colonnade in the Parade Platz, where you plod by the sheltering wall through your noontide walk, the big University dons may be heard to declare that it was here, and only here, in the college class-room, in the cloister, and the portico, that the great idea of Fatherland was born, and nursed, and strengthened into life. You should not dispute what these sages say. Once, only once, I did so. "Very

good," put in my friend, Professor Grundeis, whose great work on The Negative Conscience, though incomplete, must be known to every student of moral science; "if you will only consider how the Idea of Civil Liberty has been treated by the Church and by the State from the very beginning of time . . . . " I shrank into my snow-shoes, and muffled up my chin in a friendly fur. Beginning of time! It was then one o'clock, and at half-past one, the snow getting hard, I had been promised a drive across country in a sledge! "Suppose," I urged, "you begin with Jacoby and the Four Questions?" The stern professor took a pinch of snuff. "You English," he said, "have one bad habit,—you always begin at the end."

Yet the fact, when you come to it, is, that all advocates of the claims of Königsberg point to Jacoby and his Four Questions as the true genesis of German nationality. If you object, with a smile, that this famous Jacoby refuses to acknowledge the New Germany as his child; that he disowns and denies it; that he goes so far in his hostility as to reject a seat in the new Reichstag; they admit that such are the facts, and pretend that they matter nothing, since Bismarck's Germany will die with the Count, and that the Germany which

comes after Bismarck, the Germany of Jacoby and the Radicals, will live for ever.

Königsberg has been called the Venice of the North—a name not only wide of the mark, but far wider from the mark than is usual in such comparisons. It is, in fact, absurd. Venice is a city of gold and marble, of domes, and palaces, and campaniles; a city which is warm in tone, and high in colour; a city washed by the sea; a city glowing in a southern sun by day, and gleaming under southern stars by night. Königsberg lies in a realm of mist, through which, for half the year at least, neither sun nor star can pierce. "Eight months of mud, four months of moths," was a neat description given to me of the climate of Ost Preussen by one who knew it only too well. The city stands on the banks of a stream—the Pregel—which soaks and slips into the place by two main channels, winding and widening into breadths and marshes of frozen sea. When it is not river it is pond. One-sixth of the whole city, within the walls, is water; the surface of which is covered with broken and floating ice for nearly half the year. Much snow comes down, and the warmer air from the Baltic melts this snow into slush. "In Königsberg," said a friendly native,

"we have our seven winters. First we have rain and hail; then we have snow and mud; next we have sleet and slush; this brings us to our comfortable mid-winter, when the mercury sinks to forty degrees of frost; the country gets open, and we can sledge from the Lang Gasse to Pillau by the firm ice of the Frische Haf." In these bright days of winter-frost the city is seen at its best. The streets are free from mud, the quays are silent, and the ships are locked in ice. A layer of frozen snow lies thick on the ground, over which the sledges glide with their muffled drivers and their silvery bells. At night the stars come out—the faint and frosted stars of a northern zone. In their red light, as in that of the moon, the Gothic spires and towers of the city gain a touch of beauty; but the beauty is not that of the luminous and artistic city on the sea.

Königsberg is more like Rotterdam—a city of bridges, water-ways, and ships; of narrow alleys and gabled fronts; but here, again, the resemblance ends. The chief points about this Amber City—the lie of land and water, the quays, the Schloss and the Schloss-lake, the island, the Altstadt, the red churches, the open spaces in the town, the vast lines of fortification, the solid

magazines and burghers' dwellings—blend into a picture which will live in the traveller's memory as a thing apart. Every old city—every city with a story—has a life, a character, of its own. In this regal and knightly city, Schloss, cathedral, university—each a good thing in its kind, whether new or old—give a fantasy to the town which belongs to no other place.

The old Schloss, built by the Teutonic Knights to please heroic Ottocar, stands on levels of gigantic stones, rough and Pelasgic, likely, in the main, to last for a thousand years yet to come. Here stand the king's palace, the old torture-chamber, the picture-gallery, and the court of blood—the last-named place being that horrid vault in which the Holy Ritters, after their return from Acre and Venice, converted the Pagan Wends and Letts from the worship of Percunas, god of the thunder-storm. It is now a Wine-stube, where judges and councillors drink red wine, eat caviare, and smoke cigarettes. One walks with a hushed step through the haunts of these resolute German knights, who had fallen back in their Eastern homes before the fiery onset of the sons of Islam, to take up their cross, at first in summery Venice, afterwards in these frozen regions of swamp and

forest, far beyond the frontiers of their native land. Strength to smite, and will to endure, they had brought with them from the east and south. In the Court of Blood you can see the spot on which they put their Pagan prisoners to the test of faith; when, with swords at their throats, these prisoners were told to say, at once, in a word, whether they were willing to accept our Lord. If they answered, Yes, it was well for them, and they were free to live—to live as vassals and serfs of the Christian knights. If any lingering preference for his native god induced a wretch to pause in his reply, the sword was jobbed into his throat; and in this swift fashion Percunas was put down, and the religion of sacred trees, of thunder-gods, and of stocks and stones, died in Ost Preussen by a violent death.

This order of Teutonic Knights—founded by Duke Friedrich of Swabia, broken at Acre, ruined at Venice, revived at Marienburg, plundered by Sigismund in Poland, cheated by Albrecht of Brandenburg, dissolved by Napoleon—played a most splendid part in the drama of modern times; a part which was sometimes ruthless, often unfortunate, and yet one which has left upon the north of Europe; most of all upon these Baltic pro-

vinces—a trace that defies the obliterating hand of Time and Death. Königsberg is but one of a hundred towns which they erected in these northern woods and swamps.

It is strange to think of those German Knights, every man among them of noble blood, going out from the old distracted land to cut Pagan throats, and found, on the banks of the Pregel, the Germany of these latter days.

Every street has its own quaintness, every bridge its own story. Here a spire, and there a gable, makes a picture. In one place a narrow alley stops the way, and round the corner a broad expanse of water charms the eye. Now you have wharves and masts, anon you come suddenly on fountains and flower-beds. Open places abound, with statues of Prussian sovereigns. Walls of enormous sweep, embattled with tower and bastion, surround the city. A third of the city within these walls is grass-field and garden. Those who are native to the province find it so pleasant and picturesque (as, compared against the country round, it surely *is*) that they do not fear to describe it to a stranger as a paradise on earth. Men who are born in Königsberg seldom go away, believing that when a man who had the mis-

fortune to be born elsewhere, has found these gates open to him, he would be silly not to come in, and mad if he ever went out.

Immanuel Kant, critic of the Pure Reason, whose bronze statue stands before me as I write, was one of these Königsberg patriots. He was born in the city, and he lived in the little house near me for more than half his long life. He knew nothing of the world, and cared nothing for the world. Königsberg was enough for his eye and his heart. In his old age, he used to boast that for thirty years he had never set foot beyond the city walls. Whither could he wend? Berlin, the nearest city for which he cared a jot, was ten days off: the time which now separates London from New York. A tiny house, full of books; a little garden, full of flowers; a house near to the Schloss and the Court of Blood, and only a short walk from his class-room, satisfied all the longings of his soul. Why should he think of change? To leave Königsberg for the country-side, was to go out of Eden into dismal space.

But while many of the people of Königsberg maintain that their city is equal to Venice in beauty; there are parties in it who assert that

it is the rival of Athens in culture, of Jerusalem in sanctity. Learned people assert the one; religious people assert the other.

The fame of its learning is unquestionably great and wide. Kant gave a voice to its pretensions, which was echoed round the globe; and since his death its chairs have been filled by professors, and its schools have been crowded by scholars, of the widest renown. From the list of these famous men, is it necessary to cite the names of Bessel, Lobeck, Lehrs, Goldstücker, and Rosenkranz?

The fame of its theology is hardly less large and deep. Herder, Ebel, and Rupp, each in his sphere, has made a noise in the world of thought.

Beyond all question, Königsberg is a city of much intellectual warmth. Perhaps it would hardly be flattery to say it is the most intellectual place in Europe, since it is the head-quarters of German learning. Every one here is more or less a scholar. "You will find," said to me Dr. Jolowicz, a man who has seen the world, "that the children of a brewer in Königsberg are better instructed than the children of a state-councillor in Berlin." In this city, all the young people seem to be going to school; girls no less than

boys. "In our new Germany," said a medical professor, "we shall put the girls in line with the boys; teach them the same things; let them work for the same degrees. Our young women are better grounded than their sisters in any part of Germany." I am inclined to think this statement true.

Königsberg is full of institutions; learned institutions, official institutions, popular institutions. It has its university, three gymnasia (colleges); several high schools, many lower schools, both for boys and girls; and a great number of private schools; so many, that there seem to be two or three schools in every street. It has two courts of justice: the Stadtgericht and the Tribunal, besides a Consistorium, corresponding to our Court of Arches. It has the Schloss, the Arsenal, the Customs, and many other offices of government. The city is a great port, a vast manufactory, a frontier fortress, and the seat of government for the two great provinces of Ost and West Preussen. In it are found the Landowners' club, the Commercial club, and the Citizens' club.

In these several circles, every new thing is made known, every new truth is debated, every new personage is weighed. Political passion runs

high; these circles being divided in opinion between the hot liberalism of the university, and the stout conservatism of the church. As a rule, the landlords and professors take opposite sides; the aristocrats taking the feudal and religious view of political action; the doctors taking the modern and commercial view. Like master like man. The peasants and artisans follow their neighbours; the spade-workers voting with Bismarck and Falkenstein, the hand-workers with Jacoby and Rosenkranz.

The bargemen and sledgers are fierce politicians; men who give thought to political questions, and talk as keenly about Luxemburgh and the Rhine as the busiest statesman in Berlin. Their club is a thing to see; a big room in a beer-house near the Pregel, in which they hold sittings two or three times a-week; when each man pays down three-pence at the door, which he takes out in white beer and tobacco, while his favourite speaker is denouncing Louis Napoleon, and, metaphorically, chawing up the French.

CHAPTER V.

CHURCH AND UNIVERSITY.

In this city of contradictions—home of the Teutonic Knights and of the modern democrats—city of Father Fritz and of Immanuel Kant—cradle of religious enterprise and of philosophical utilitarianism—scene of the coronation and of the Four Questions—fortress of the old Prussia and of the new Germany—a strange affair took place some years ago, many of the actors in which are still alive, and the end of which we have not come to yet.

The persons who stood in front of this battle were: on one side, two very high and eloquent clergymen, the Very Reverend the Archdeacon Wilhelm Ebel, dean of the Altstadt church, and the Rev. Heinrich Diestel, pastor of the Haberberg church: on the other side, Ober-Präsident Heinrich Theodor von Schön and the famous Professor Sachs, known as Mephistophiles Sachs,

The two clergymen were defendants in a suit, of which von Schön was the chief promoter, and Sachs the chief witness. Personal matters of an extraordinary kind were alleged against these ministers of the Church; but the personal affairs, though strange and serious, were known to be little more than the husk and shell of the actual charge.

Much scandal was talked and written; for a scandalous charge was found to be a convenient form under which two angry and powerful corporations could offer each other a battle to the death.

The Very Reverend Archdeacon Ebel and the Rev. Pastor Diestel (the second of whom was the father of our new Angel of Light) were men of exalted piety, who, in their several churches, had begun to preach, in a fervid manner, and with much success, in support of a mystical doctrine of regeneration; doing so at a time when religion was out of vogue, and Christianity was regarded by learned men as an ancient practical joke. Many men, and still more women, took hold of this new doctrine of a better life. The Altstadt church was filled by a fashionable audience; the Haberberg church, lying in a distant suburb, beyond the Pregel, was filled by farmers, artisans, and

clerks. The two divines had a great day in the Lord, and, in consequence of their labours, a hot revival of religion seemed to be setting in.

Learned men and liberal leaders did not like this movement in the Church. They feared, and very wisely feared, that the spirit which was spurring the people into repentance of their sins would be found in the long run to have been a conservative spirit, and that some of those who fell under the influence of these holy and eloquent preachers would be drawn away from the liberal and rationalistic side in politics to that of the feudal and clerical side. In order to prevent such a change of front, the radicals and rationalists set themselves to oppose and to expose the two men who seemed to be leading the susceptible citizens astray; driving them back, by pictures of what they called imaginary heavens and hells, into the worst ways of superstition; separating them from their staunch friends, the political reformers; and teaching them to despise the good things of this present life in favour of crowns of glory to be worn in a world to come. In opposing and exposing men so dangerous to their party, some of the liberal leaders had a duty to perform of a very unpleasant kind. They had to appear as persecutors; they had to

make use of rumours and scandals which they could not prove; when the day of trial came upon them they had to stand by men who could only have helped them in their work by first consenting to betray the most sacred trusts. Public men, it is often said, must not be nice; and some of the Ost Preussen liberals, having entered on a campaign against what they had good ground for considering as a theocratic and conservative reaction, were compelled to lay aside the more delicate scruples and hesitations of public men. They listened to any calumny, however gross. They studied terms of insult and reproach. Some of the more daring spirits invented facts.

The two revival clergymen had not called either themselves or their flocks by any new name; for they did not openly profess to hold any new doctrine. They pretended to be Lutheran and Evangelical; but Lutheran and Evangelical of a warmer type; men with a finer sense of religion, and a quicker belief in the coming Advent of our Lord. Their philosophical and radical enemy, Ober-Präsident von Schön, stung them with the nickname of Muckers; by which odious appellation they have since that day been mostly known. Writers who wish to treat these people with

respect, speak of them as Ebelians. Frequently they are grouped under the general name of Pietists; a word which they do not own, but to which they would probably not object. But in common life, they are known from the Rhine to the Baltic, in all the cities where they are said to have either public congregations or secret societies, as the Mucker, and only as the Mucker.

Mucker is a cant word, of dubious origin. It describes the habits of vermin, such as rats and hares; and, by verbal license, of men who have the like habits with rats and hares. When applied to men of a higher rank, it is meant to suggest cunning, lewdness, and hypocrisy. Mawworm in Bickerstaffe's comedy of The Hypocrite, may suggest the kind of knave who is meant by a German when he flings the epithet Mucker at a religious man. Of course the word is indignantly denounced and repudiated by Ebel's followers and friends.

A religious revival was in those days, and in that old Prussian society, a strange and perilous thing. Ebel's revival found high friends; but to many persons of position and responsibility, it was a thing out of time, out of order, almost out of nature. The professional mind would not tolerate

it, the official mind could not understand it. Both parties scorned it as a craze which had fallen on women, and on men who had the fantasies of women. Apart from politics, the revival was a trouble, an excitement, a cause of strife. What man in authority is fond of a movement which disturbs the public peace? And how can a movement, caused by a warm conviction that the day of judgment is near at hand, be other than a cause of trouble to the official mind?

A revival! cried the rationalistic professors in the portico; what do you want to revive? A finer sense of the immediateness of God, you say! What finer sense? And what do you mean by the immediateness of God?

A revival! said the highly-drilled Government officials; what is the object of all this fuss and noise? Why are these people crowding to the Old Town church? What is the purpose of these evening lectures, these extra services, these private meetings of men and women? All this passion betrays a want of sense, said the philosophers; all this disorder betrays a want of drill, said the magistrates. Neither in the University nor in the Schloss could the movement be regarded as a simple and harmless fact.

The service of religion had in those days sunk very much into a decorous form, which offended nobody, because that service was accepted on all sides as a state tradition, a part of the high police of society, a field for Sunday preachers, in which there could be no great harm, since there was no longer in it a spark of life. Learning had no fear of it, science hardly knew it. The rationalistic creeds then current in every German College, were left untouched by a public ceremonial rite, which seemed to have no other end in view than to keep women in their place, and find a little amusement for official men. In Prussia, the church has always been a branch of the high police. Men in office, and men who are seeking office, go to it as part of their duty; as a parade-ground, where they see and can be seen. But their presence is a form, and sometimes a joke. One day, General Werther, a man of deep religious feeling, met Baron Humboldt coming out of the court chapel in Berlin. The General smiled as he shook hands with his friend, saying he was glad to see the philosopher at church. "You see, General," said the veteran minister, whose breast was covered with stars and crosses, "I want to get on in the world."

Prussian philosophers, content that people

who knew no better should doze through a dull sermon, spoke with reserve, if not with respect, of the popular divines. They allowed, like their fellows among ourselves, that the Liturgy was a very fine thing—considered as a work of art; and on festive occasions they betrayed a lofty condescension to public taste, by sauntering in person to the parish church. Thus far they could go; not one step farther. If they agreed to tolerate the clergy, it was only so long as these parsons knew how to be dull, decorous, and discreet. A church that should be active and aggressive—that should talk of its mission—that should set itself against the world—that should dream of saving souls—that should prattle of a day of judgment—they could neither visit nor forgive.

Prussian magistrates were even less tolerant of revival clergymen than the professors. To philosophers, these busy divines were a nuisance; to officers of state, they might become a peril. Preachers who announced the Second Coming filled the church with crowds; causing a morbid feeling in society; leading to keen debates in the journals; and sometimes thronging the streets and squares. All these excitements struck the official mind as

unfavourable to the city, to the course of trade, to the preservation of peace. In that stout old Preussen, where everything was kept in order, the cities like the hamlets, the churches like the theatres, the whole province was governed like a camp, and the people in it were ruled by articles of war. But, now, in the Old Town church, under pretence of piety and worship, a clergyman of rank was introducing novelties, things unknown in the book of religious drill! To an Ober-Präsident who had no personal leaning towards the clerical party, this was too much. In the past, religion had done something for Prussia; and the magistrate of a powerful kingdom was not averse to Prussia doing something for religion; but he could not be made to see that she was called upon to do it in any other way than her own; not with noise and fuss, with shouts and riot, but in full dress, marching in true time, and with her hand on her sword. A morbid and irregular movement in the souls of men, would be to such an officer hateful and perplexing. What could he do with it? What were the clergy about? Were not these pastors paid to keep things quiet? Was it conceivable that men who received money for aiding to maintain the public peace, should have been guilty of

stirring their hearers into frenzy? A mutiny in the army could hardly have surprised the magistrates more than a revival in the Church.

What to them was the church in Ost Preussen, except a part of that vast military and social organisation, the twin objects of which are peace and strength?

To Archdeacon Ebel, and to the disciples whom he drew into his inner circle, this church appeared to be something else,—something different to either a police-office or a barrack. It was the house of God. Its ministers were the servants of God. Its congregation were the children of God.

Ebel was of the high Church, very high; and the great purport of his ministry was to prepare mankind for a Coming Christ.

Hence he came to be branded with an odious name.

CHAPTER VI.

NASSE MUCKER.

YESTERDAY, at tea-time, my learned friend, Rechsanwalt Dreher, came into my room to tell me of a little treat which he had been preparing for my instruction.

"What is it?"

"Herr John Bull, would it please you to undergo the rite of initiation?"

"Initiation! Into what?"

"Into the mystery of mysteries; into the secret of Königsberg; into the high and well-born society of the Nasse Mucker."

"And what, pray, Herr Advocat, is a nasser Mucker?"

"Ha, ha!" he roared. "Ein nasser Muckèr is a Wet Mucker,—as your people in London say a Wet Quaker. Ein nasser Mucker is a Pasquin,—what you may call a Punch."

"And who, may I venture to ask, are these Wet Muckers, these Pasquins and Punches?"

"Ha, ha!" laughed the learned lawyer,—"every one: that is to say, every one who is not a fool; every one who is not a slave; every man with a head on his shoulders, and a diploma in his pocket."

"You wish me to understand that most of the professors and students belong to this high and well-born society?"

"So, Herr John Bull; that is so. Nôt all, however; since there may be fools and slaves, men without heads, who yet—and much the pity!—have diplomas in their pockets, and sit in professors' chairs. But if every man in the University is not a Wet Mucker, plenty of Wet Muckers may be found outside the University,—mostly among those rich bankers and shippers of Königsberg who have seen the world, and among those country gentlemen of Ost Preussen who have been taught the sciences and arts."

"What, then, is the nature of this Wet Muckerism, to which so many free and learned men subscribe?"

"My friend, it is the counter-comedy."

"Counter-comedy?"

"Yes, the counter-comedy; the movement against the movement; the only answer which in these days science can make to superstition."

"But what is this movement of superstition, to which these learned men reply?"

"Hush!" he said, his finger on his lip. With an air of mock solemnity he looked round the room, locked the folding-doors, drew the curtains closer, and then came back to his seat near the stove. I looked into his face for an explanation. "Hush!" he said. "It is the Mucker!"

"Mucker? That, I remember, was the cry of those students in the Hof Gasse when the soldiers came rattling down. 'Mucker hoch! Mucker hoch!' What is 'Mucker?' Where do you get the word?"

"H'm!" breathed the learned pundit through his nose; "that *is* a question. By-and-by it shall be answered, not now. The origin of this word has not been cleared from doubt. I have myself had the good fortune to trace it in the Wendisch, Mœso-Gothic, and Aryan dialects."

"Have you?"

"Yes; when my work on The Pandecten is completed (the nineteenth volume is now ready, and perhaps I shall wind it up in six more

tomes), I shall begin a history of the word MUCKER, showing its probable origin, and tracing its changes of sense in all ages and through all languages. At present, you must pardon me for offering you only a short abridgment."

"Thank you."

"When Zoroaster gave laws to his people after their arrival in the land of Nod . . . ."

"But, will you tell me what the word Mucker means in the present day?"

"There, you English again! You will begin at the end. The word means anything, nothing. It is a term of the common people. It is a reproach, a sarcasm, an accusation, an insult. It suggests the habits of vermin, and of men who are thought to be hardly any higher in the scale of education than vermin."

"Against whom is it applied?"

"Ha, ha!" cried the learned Advocate, with a shrug and a laugh, "against our enemies: against knaves and fools, against ranters and canters, against hypocrites and Pietists . . . But we must now begin our rites. You smoke tobacco? You drink Roman punch?"

"Well, yes; I take such things under good advice—as medicine."

A pull of the bell, a word to the servant, and in a few seconds we had a bowl of Roman punch, a bag of strong Swabian tobacco, and a couple of new hunting-pipes, laid on the table.

"Kneel down, Novitius," said the lawyer; on my doing which, he filled a pipe with tobacco, lit a match, put the amber piece to his lips, drew three or four breaths through the tube, and then handed the pipe to me, saying: "Smoke, my son; but mind, you must only smoke from the heart, in obedience to the voice within." I tried to do so. When I had taken some dozen whiffs in silence, he inquired: "Have you come, my well-beloved, to a full conviction and acceptance of the universal prevalence of light?"

"Yes; my pipe is lighted."

"Good; very good, my son. You are an excellent novice. That is the first step in knowledge. It is gained. Now we ascend to the second stage. Keep still; you must not rise just yet. Observe: I fill this glass with water; with punch, you would say; well, punch is water, with a dash of spirit, with a little acid; in the main, it is water. I put it to my lips and sip one drop. Now, drink it off."

I did so.

"Have you come to a full consciousness, my much beloved, of the universal prevalence and acceptance of the principle of water?"

"I think so. Put me to the test again."

"Good boy," said my brother lawyer, "be grave and tranquil; this is a secret thing. Now these two principles—the first principle being that of Light, the second principle being that of Water—are the alpha and the omega, the beginning and the end, the sun and the moon, the positive and the negative, the right line and the curve, the conscious and the unconscious, the active and the passive, the male and the female. Their union is creation; their divorce is chaos. Give heed to what I say; remember by this sign"—and he gave me a sudden tap on the forehead with his pipe.

"That is the second step," said my friendly teacher. "Now come we . . . . in the meantime you should hold on closely by the second principle . . . . to the third and final stage. Observe, again; I bare my head, as a sign that everything is done in open day and perfect innocence. I put this linen sheet round my shoulders as a mark of my ghostly office. I invoke the gods to bless this work, and then march round and round you,

slowly drawing nearer until I touch, with my hand, your coat, your elbow, your knee, your face; until, at length, I bend in loving friendship, raise you from the ground, and kiss your cheek. There, it is done! You are now sealed to the circle—sealed by a seraphic kiss. For life and death you are one of the Nasse Mucker. . . . . Take some punch."

"Thank you. And what, now, does this fooling mean?"

"It is the reply of fun to folly—of nonsense to pietism—of . . . ."

"Were you going to say of the University to the Church?"

"H'm! Perhaps! Yes, you are right."

I have found it so. Between these two high sections of Prussian society there is, and has been now for many years past, a bitter feud; a feud which has lasted long, and will last our time, since it arises from the clash of mind and conflict of principles; laymen snarling at the sanctimonious pretensions of the Church; Churchmen, in their turn, assailing and condemning what they call the latitudinarian, not to say licentious, principles of the University. One day this quarrel has taken a dogmatic shape, another day it has

taken a personal shape. Now it has been a question of Kant's atheism, anon it has been a question of Ebel's morality. But these things are affairs of a day, while the true causes of this enmity between philosophers and divines must be sought in the nature of their studies, and in the purposes to which they devote their powers. When the chief cause is found, it will be variously described, according to the point of view from which the writer makes his observation. Seen from the Portico, it strikes him as no other than that hatred with which priests and their dupes have in all ages met the advances of science and the liberties of thought. Seen from the Altar, it appears to be no more, and no less, than that hostile spirit which the children of this devil's kingdom have at all times shown towards those ministers of religion who have been zealous for the things of God.

The German churchmen call their opponents infidels; the laymen call their enemies Mucker. These two armies are not unfairly matched in strength. If nearly all the lay students are on one side, most of the women, even the mothers and sisters of these students, are on the other. The men are divided into camps. If the great doctors

and professors side with science against theology; many of those noble counts and barons who descend from the Teutonic Knights, and own the grass-lands and water-rights of Ost Preussen, side with theology against science.

Years ago, these two armies met—like the scoffers and believers in the Hof Gasse on Monday night,—and fought, on a very old battle-field, a pretty warm campaign.

An ancient church, built near the Schloss by the Teutonic Knights, and known to the commons either as the Old Town Church, or the Luther Church, was rotting into ruin; when, to prevent people being killed by the falling stones, the Government gave orders to pull it down. This edifice had become dear to every one, from the fact that a son of Martin Luther had preached from its pulpit, and been buried under its altar. Many persons, not of the university, hoped that a new church would be built on this sacred spot; but the need for opening up ground about the Schloss was very great, and was pressed on the King Friedrich Wilhelm III. both on military and on sanitary grounds. King Friedrich Wilhelm consented that the ground should be cleared and converted into a public square;

charging himself with the erection, in a neighbouring street, of a new Old Town Church; an edifice which he commenced, and his son completed, after a poor design, of warm red brick, in the Gothic style. A stone, bearing a few words of record, was placed over the site of young Luther's grave.

Now, this new square is in the best part of the Old Town; on the main lines of road from the Schloss to the Quays, the Exchange, and the railway. Of all places in Königsberg it is, perhaps, the very best site for a public statue.

Well, the honours of a public statue having been voted to the most famous man who has ever dwelt in Königsberg, to Immanuel Kant, Professor Rosenkranz and his fellows in the University were anxious that this work of art should be erected in the Old Town square; as being not only the most conspicuous, but also the most appropriate spot. In that square stands a gymnasium, the high school of the city. Close to it rise the girl's school, the pauper house, and many other schools; while near to it stands the house in which the great philosopher lived and taught. But the religious world—notably that part of the religious world which we should call the

High Church—would not hear of such a thing being done. Kant, they said, was a philosopher and a free-thinker. He had no sense of religion. He set aside the gospels. He rejected Christ. How could they suffer these professors to plant the statue of such a man on holy ground? Were they Pagans and Jews that they should set up Kant against Luther, a great brass image of the Critic of Pure Reason against the modest stone which commemorated the minister of God?

The fight was long and fierce; and was only ended by a personal reference to the King.

One of the leading men on the religious side was Graf von Kanitz, a person of high birth, and of mystic tendencies. This nobleman had been for many years a constant worshipper in the church which had now been taken down. Sore trouble had fallen on the minister and congregation of that church; trouble in which the Graf von Kanitz had borne his part; for the minister of that church was the renowned Archdeacon Ebel, the man who had been silenced and disgraced as the founder of Muckerism; mainly, as Kanitz thought, by the treacheries of these professors, and by the violence of their friends in high places; and that minister, now ruined, exiled, killed, by

these unbelieving babblers of the University, the Graf von Kanitz had conscientiously accepted as a man of God. How could he be silent when this godless crew of students and professors were trying to set up, on the very ground made holy by the martyr Ebel, a brazen image of their idol Kant?

Graf von Kanitz rode to Berlin, sought an interview with the King, and came back to Königsberg with a royal order in his pocket that some other spot must be found for the statue of Immanuel Kant.

That Old Town Square is the scene of a story which has never yet been told. A fountain stands in the centre, and the rest of the ground is laid out with shrubs and walks.

The official name which it bears is Altstädtische Platz.

The common name for it is Mucker Platz.

Students and wags call it Seraphim Platz.

CHAPTER VII.

A GREAT APPEAL.

In the month of February, 1842, the judges of the Royal Court of Berlin (Das Königliche Kammer Gericht) were busy with a cause which had taxed their time, and disturbed the conscience of Germany for many years.

The cause about to be finally decided in the supreme court (Appellations-senat), had come before the bench in the shape of an appeal from the verdict given by an inferior court (Criminal-senat) in the previous reign.

It was alleged by the appellants that the finding of the lower court was against the evidence; that the decision was irregular in form; and that the penalties imposed were in excess of the offences alleged.

The cause was of a most unusual kind; not only as to its moral nature, but as to its legal

history. In the first instance, it had been raised in a local court at Königsberg, from which city it had been removed, before any stage in the matter had been reached, on the ground that persons high in office were exercising so much influence in the court that justice would be likely to fail, and two able and worthy clergymen to be undone. It had next been heard in the lower court of the Kammer Gericht, in Berlin. Karl Baron von Altenstein, the rationalistic Minister of Public Instruction (which office, in Prussia, has charge of ecclesiastical affairs), was thought to have been unfavourable to the defendants. The hearing had been long; and when the verdict was given (March, 1839), a period of no less than five months had elapsed between the finding of the court and the publication of the sentence. This delay had given rise to a thousand suspicions of foul play; the more freely since many men who called themselves enemies of the two clergymen owned that the sentence which had been pronounced was far in excess of any reasonable demands of justice.

Within a year, King Friedrich Wilhelm the Third dying, his son, Friedrich Wilhelm the Fourth, succeeded to the throne. In the same year Karl von Altenstein died, and the pietistic

Eichhorn succeeded him in the ministry of Public Instruction.

The worsted parties in the suit of 1839 now appealed against the finding of the Criminal Senate to the higher court; and after a hearing which lasted for two years more, the court was about to pronounce a verdict from which there could be no appeal.

The matter before the supreme court was a scandalous charge which had been raised, in the first instance by a great nobleman of Ost Preussen, called the Graf von Finkenstein, against two clergymen, the Very Rev. Archdeacon Wilhelm Ebel, and the Rev. Heinrich Diestel; a very scandalous charge, since it was alleged against them, not only that their doctrines were unsound, but that their lives were impure.

Nor did the fortunes of these two clergymen only hang upon the finding of their judge. In point of form, Archdeacon Ebel and Pastor Diestel were the only persons accused; but the cry which had been raised against these gentlemen was of a kind that implied the guilt of many more. If Ebel had done the wrong alleged against him by his enemies, the partners in his practices, since they must have shared his guilt, would

have to bear the odious publicity attaching to his crimes. The list of persons so involved in the consequences of this charge was very long; comprising a good many men, and yet more women, of high birth and strong position in the society of Ost Preussen; and all these persons, together with nearly all their families and friends, supported Ebel and Diestel in their appeal from what they called local jealousy and provincial injustice to the courts in Berlin.

The appeal had lasted long, because the evidence tendered for acceptance by the court on both sides had been strange, conflicting, and obscure. Things were alleged against these clergymen of an all but incredible kind. They were accused of certain crimes for which the German language supplied no names, and of which the Prussian law could take no note. These charges, though made by men of rank, were supported by the evidence of spies and apostates; the chief of whom was Professor Sachs; a man who filled, with great distinction, a chair of medicine in the University of Königsberg. On the side of the defence, not only were these alleged offences denied, but the witnesses who proved them, most of all Professor Sachs, were denounced as wretches unfit to be heard in

a court of law. The old Prussian system of legal procedure gave a fine field to such causes; for the trial took place with closed doors, the witnesses were never brought into court, and all the depositions were taken in writing. At the whim of either party, anything was put in as evidence; books, prints, deeds, manuscripts. In a case like that against Archdeacon Ebel, it is an open question whether counsel might not have put into court the whole royal library of Berlin. The proofs actually laid before the judges, evidence bearing on the case, ran the whole round of the sciences; no less than ninety volumes of written and printed matter lying on their table; comprising, among things of lesser note, volumes of divinity, tracts on logic, bundles of ecclesiastical history, essays on the nature of things, prayers and sermons, debates on final causes, and speculations on the destiny of man. These proofs contained prolusions on such topics as grace and works, the freedom of man's will, and the redeeming power of faith. They referred to spiritual affinities and mortal marriage. They defined the use and abuse of symbols. What could a legal tribunal make of such a case?

Professor Sachs's evidence contained not only

a statement of facts within his knowledge, but an effective gallery of portraits, and a psychological study of the most curious kind.

But the chief trouble of the judges, and the true reason why the trial was prolonged, is said to have been, not so much the difficulty of believing or rejecting Sachs, as that of either resisting or reconciling the new King, in whom the accused clergymen found a zealous and powerful friend.

Friedrich Wilhelm the Fourth, King of Prussia, is one of the few princes who in these liberal days have been grossly calumniated and persistently misconceived by us; though his domestic virtues and religious views were such as ought to have won for him every English heart. He was neither a strong man nor a wise man. He had none of Cromwell's insight, none of Napoleon's dash. One grain of political genius would have given him what his happier nephew will one day find at his feet, the crown of Germany. But while Friedrich Wilhelm was in no sense a daring prince, he was a kindly, generous, and faithful man; a friend of scholars and travellers; a great lover of art; a collector of antiquities; a man of books and of study, who spent his happiest hours in the library and the picture-gallery, and preferred the

conversation of writers and discoverers to that of placemen and soldiers. It is hard for a king of Prussia to be anything beyond the general of a camp. Prussia is one huge barrack. Every man is trained to the use of arms; everything is done in uniform; and the king is chief drill-serjeant in his realm. To wear sword and plume, to review the guards, to hold military receptions, are nothing. The king is expected to be a real soldier; to pass much of his time in barrack; to have a great military household; to receive his general officers at his table daily; and to live in times of peace the life of a commander in the field. Friedrich Wilhelm could not free himself from the traditions of his house. He had seen hard service in his youth, and he continued to play at the trade of war in his riper years. But the care of his army did not absorb his mind. He gathered eminent civilians about him; men like Humboldt, Bunsen, Rauch, and Kiss; friends of his heart on whom he shed the light of his high place, and who will surround his name for ever with the radiance of their fame. He was exceedingly gentle in his manners. He was good and pious; more so, many of his people thought, than became a king.

Yet, what is the notion of an ordinary English boy as to this good king? That his name was Cliquot, that he was in the habit of moping about rooms with a bottle at his lips, that he got tipsy on champagne about twenty times a-day. An English boy is taken by surprise, when told that this prince, whom he calls Cliquot, was a very poor tippler; in fact, that while he ate (on account of his malady) enough for a giant, he drank no more than a child.

It is one of those thousand errors of fact in regard to Prussia, which made that glorious Seven Days' War a surprise to many among us; boys of all ages, and of very high rank.

His Majesty was a man of wide religious knowledge, and of deep religious feeling. He kept a keen eye upon researches and discoveries throwing light upon the Bible story. Bunsen enjoyed his confidence. The antiquities of Rome and of Egypt engaged his attention. In connexion with Queen Victoria, he founded the Protestant bishopric of Jerusalem. All his life he favoured the Church, and the professors of divinity always found in him a friend.

Perhaps, as some of his people murmured, he was apt to go further in his zeal for the Church

than was prudent in the king of a country in which many of the inhabitants were rationalists, infidels, and Jews. But he could not do these things by halves. A man of great natural piety, open to voices and promptings of the Spirit, he fancied he had received a call to promote true godliness on the earth. He felt a keen interest in revivals; and seemed to be expecting that a great work of the Spirit would be done in his reign. Those exalted people in the Lutheran Church who are known as Pietists enjoyed his favour; and King Friedrich Wilhelm made no secret of his being a Pietist himself. In fact, he was a Pietist, and something more. He was a believer in tokens and witches; nay, he was inclined to accept, though in secret only, the suggestions of sorcery and witchcraft. He toyed with astrology, and had fitful dreams of enjoying the elixir of life.

Is it surprising that a prince with such leanings, should be thought capable, when his passions had been stirred, of taking a decisive course in a matter which concerns the life and fame of two holy men?

In those old times, as the Prussian courts of justice sat with closed doors, no report of what

took place in the Supreme Court was given to the world. The counsel may have chattered in their dining-rooms, and the judges may have tickled the fancies of their female friends by hints of what was going on. Every one wished to hear the latest news; for how could a courtly and intellectual society be indifferent to a cause in which the Schöns, the Auerswalds, the Finkensteins, the von der Gröbens, people in the highest ranks of the Prussian nobility, were all concerned? Why had Graf von Finkenstein turned persecutor? What had induced Professor Sachs to play the part of spy? Why had Professor Olshausen given evidence against his former friends? How had the Ober-Präsident come to act so sharply against these clergymen? What was the meaning of the strange report that Ida, Countess von der Gröben, had become one of Archdeacon Ebel's spiritual wives? What was a spiritual wife? Had the very reverend gentlemen any other of these spiritual wives? If so, how many, and who were they?

Society in Berlin, in Königsberg, in fact, in every German city, was full of questions, to which the only answers that could be got were lame and rare. In the streets, it was only known that something was going on behind these closed doors

of the Kammer Gericht, in which the king took a close and personal interest; but the details of this mysterious trial remained unknown.

Even when the verdict of the court was published, it told the eager watchers next to nothing. In some parts it reversed the finding of the lower court; for it removed from the two clergymen the brand of infamy and the sentence of imprisonment. But then it gave no reason for these changes, and suppressed the details on which its own verdict stood. Without the evidence of Sachs, the new finding could only be intelligible to the parties concerned; and on the trial coming to an end, that evidence given by Sachs was sealed up by the judge and deposited in the archives of his court. All Germany believed that a royal influence had been made to weigh on the judges; men who, in that Prussia which has since been swept away in the smoke of Königgrätz, were supposed to lead a very bad life when the facts of a suit inclined them to do one thing and the king's will compelled them to do another. All these rumours were, no doubt, beside the mark; but the calumnies heaped upon the prince by his enemies were the natural result of a system which conducted public causes with closed doors and with

written evidence, instead of with open courts and witnesses face to face.

The little that escaped through these closed doors, made people open their eyes in wonder; for the things which were said to have been alleged by Sachs against the two popular preachers and their fair penitents, seemed to hint that the Teuton of our own day, a product of the highest civilisation, is capable of dreaming like Jacob Böhme, of preaching like Melchior Hofmann, and of acting like John of Leyden.

Was it true, as alleged, that two German clergymen, of high repute for sanctity, had been found guilty of committing Spiritual polygamy? Was it possible that in the nineteenth century a divine could pretend to have the right of marrying one wife in the flesh, another wife in the spirit?

CHAPTER VIII.

SPIRITUAL WIVES.

A FEW words dropt by Brigham Young, in the course of a long reply to questions of mine on another point, told me that the Mormon Pope knew more than could be found in books about that doctrine of the Spiritual wife, which, in our own day, in the midst of our churches, and chiefly, if not wholly, among men of Teutonic race, has flowered out into so many new and surprising domestic facts: at Salt Lake City into Polygamy; among the New England spiritual circles into Affinities; at Mount Lebanon into Celibate Love; at Wallingford and Oneida Creek into Complex Marriage, and in a hundred American cities into some more or less open form of Free Love.

In the neglect which has fallen upon everything connected with the progress of our moral life, it has been commonly said that Sydney Rigdon, the first disciple of any weight whom

Joseph Smith drew into his Mormon tabernacle, was the man in whose busy brain this doctrine of Spiritual wifehood had been born. Remy and Brenchley, who wrote with some care, assert that Rigdon *invented* the theory of the Spiritual wife; and they assume that the repugnance of Mormon elders to this invention was the chief cause of Rigdon being rejected as prophet, and expelled from the church after the death of Joseph Smith. Some such statement will be found, I think, in each of the few books which have, as yet, paid any attention to this curious subject. Young said otherwise; and a little inquiry among such friends of mine as either were or had been ministers of religion in New England cities, soon showed me that, even as regards the history of Spiritual wives in America, Young was right.

Sydney Rigdon, at the time of his conversion by Parley Pratt, was the pastor of a church at Kirtland, in Ohio. He had already changed his religion more than once, as he afterwards changed it again more than once. He had been a loud ranter, a hot revivalist; and after his conversion to the Mormon faith, he laboured in his district among the more exalted members of

the most exalted sects. He knew the writings of Mahan, Gates, and Boyle—writings in which love and marriage are considered in relation to gospel liberty and a future life. It is all but certain that he was acquainted with the ideas of Hiram Sheldon and Father Noyes, the two most active founders of the Perfect Church. When, therefore, Rigdon startled the Mormon elders at Nauvoo with his theory about holy men having a right to woo and to win for themselves brides of the spirit as well as wives of the flesh, he was doing no more than giving a crude and premature form to mystical speculations then current in the chairs and pulpits of Oberlin, Philadelphia, and New Haven. All the Perfect churches, being based on the great dogma of the saints having to live a life on earth free from sin, professed to believe that marriage, in its old and carnal shape, would pass away, and be replaced in time by a new, a holier, and more lasting state. Oberlin, one of the chief centres of this Perfect creed, is in Ohio, a few miles only from Kirtland, where Rigdon preached and dwelt.

What this Mormon fanatic taught his friends at Nauvoo, he had learned from people wiser than himself. From whom?

The theory of Spiritual wives is not yet forty years old in the United States; yet the seed-plot and the source appear to be alike involved in haze and fog. Father Noyes, who has lived through every phase of it, and who has been an actor in the business more than once, regards it as an eruption from the New England soil, which came out, like a rash on the human skin, after the throes of a great revival, not in one place only, but in many places, at the same moment of time. Warren Chace, a man who is said to have had a wider personal experience in the matter than any other teacher, announces it as a gift of the Spirit, the last refuge of virtue in a profligate world. The Rev. Hiram Sheldon, the original preacher of salvation from sin, at least in the burnt district of New York, had an inkling of it; since he found in Sophia Cook, one of his fair disciples, a kinship of soul which he had failed to perceive in his own wedded wife. The Rev. Jarvis Rider, a preacher who is said to have had an experience among spirit-brides only less wide and general than Warren Chace, considers it a necessary consequence of the Second Coming, of causing God's will to be done on earth as it is done in heaven. Lucina Umphreville, Mary Lincoln, and Maria

Brown, three of those female witnesses who have publicly preached and practised it, either in its positive form of heavenly wifehood, or in its negative form of free love, announce it as a final revelation to their sex. Yet none of these male and female preachers can pretend to say where the dogma was heard of first, and who has to answer for its introduction to the American religious world.

I have received from sober witnesses in the United States, most of them preachers and teachers, a good many confessions on this subject of the first appearance in their midst of Spiritual wives. Some of these confessions I shall lay before my reader in the proper place. Some persons trace the doctrine to the scandals caused in the religious world by the famous bundling at Brimfield, in Massachusetts. Others find the germ of it in the Battle Axe Correspondence; in which Father Noyes first roused the sects of New England into fury, by his declaration that in the true Church of God, the rite of marriage, like every other rite prescribed by the law, would be abolished. A few, perhaps, gain a clue to the mystery in the writings of Theophilus Gates, a philosopher of the Quaker City, who is said to

have put religion on his shoulder as a cloak, under which he might openly proclaim, like John of Leyden, his policy of a community of wives. Hiram Sheldon, John H. Noyes, and John B. Foot, have had the glory and the odium of this doctrine cast upon them; glory and odium which they have shared with Jarvis Rider, Horace Patten, Erasmus Stone, and many more. Ann Lee and Andrew Jackson Davis might urge a bolder plea; but none of these preachers can make out his claim against the rest, for in truth, no one man or woman in America can be said to have invented the doctrine of Spiritual wives, which appears to have been less a work of men than a natural growth of time.

It has not, I think, been noticed by any writer that three of the most singular movements in the churches of our generation seem to have been connected, more or less closely, with the state of mind produced by revivals; one in Germany, one in England, and one in the United States; movements which resulted, among other things, in the establishment of three singular societies—the congregation of Pietists, vulgarly called the Mucker, at Königsberg, the brotherhood of Princeites at Spaxton, and the Bible Communists at Oneida Creek.

These three movements, which have a great deal in common, began without concert, in distant parts of the world, under separate church rules, and in widely different social circumstances. The first movement was in Ost Preussen; the second in England; the third, and most important, in Massachusetts and New York. They had these chief things in common; they began in colleges, they affected the form of family life, and they were carried on by clergymen; each movement in a place of learning and of theological study; that in Germany at the Luther-Kirch of Königsberg, that in England at St. David's College, that in the United States at Yale College. These movements began to attract public notice much about the same time; for Archdeacon Ebel, the chief founder of Muckerism, announced the year 1836 as the opening year of the personal reign of Christ; in that year the Rev. Henry James Prince became a student of divinity, founded the order of Lampeter Brethren, and received his pretended gift of the Holy Ghost; and Father Noyes published the famous paper known as the Battle Axe Letter. These three divines, one Lutheran, one Anglican, one Congregational, began their work in perfect ignorance of each other. Ebel is now

dead: but I have reason to believe that when he proposed his theory in the Luther church in his native city, he had never heard the name of either Brother Prince or of Father Noyes. I can answer for the other two; until a few months ago, Noyes had never heard of Ebel, and Prince had never heard of Noyes.

Each movement was regarded by its votaries as the most perfect fruit of the revival spirit. In truth, the change which came upon the saints from their close experience of revival passion, was regarded by themselves as in some degree miraculous; equal in divine significance to a new creation of the world. When the storm had gone by, and the chaff had been swept away, it was seen in each country that a precious remnant had been tried and saved—brought into the fold of God, and freed for ever from the consciousness of sin. These heirs of clay had been made the children of light. In His elected ones the old Adam of the flesh was dead; a new Adam, perfect in the spirit, had been born. These fruits of the revival seem to have been equally received by the countesses who knelt at the feet of Ebel in Ost Preussen, by the dowagers and country gentlemen who swelled the ranks of Prince in Sussex and

Somerset, by the craftsmen who followed Noyes and Sheldon in Massachusetts and New York. They who had been called by the Lamb, no longer dwelt on the earth, subject to its laws and canons; they were no longer amenable to pain, disease, and death. They had risen into a sphere of gospel liberty and gospel light. A new earth and a new heaven had been created round them, in which they lived and moved by a new law. To some of them the decrees of courts and councils were as nothing; property was nothing, marriage was nothing—mere rags and shreds of a world that had passed away. To all of them a new light had been given on the subject of spirit-brides; the higher relation of woman to man in the new kingdom of heaven.

CHAPTER IX.

CELESTIAL LOVE.

THE theory of Spiritual Wives, as it appears to the carnal mind, may be stated in a few words; since to the carnal mind this mystical doctrine is but a religious and romantic disguise for an abomination known in Boston and New York under the name of Free Love.

In this common aspect, the theory is, that a man who may be either unmarried before the law or wedded to a woman whom he cannot love as a wife should be loved, shall have the right, in virtue of a higher morality, and a more sacred duty than the churches teach him, to go out among the crowd of his female friends, and seek a partner in whom he shall find some special fitness for a union with himself; and when he has found such a bride of the soul, that he shall have the further right of courting her, even though she may have taken vows as another

man's wife, and of entering into closer and sweeter relations with her than those which belong to the common earth; all vows on his part and on her part being to this end thrust aside as so much worldly waste. Such would be the definition of Spiritual wifehood given by writers like Lizzie Doten and Warren Chace, the apostles and perhaps the martyrs of Free Love.

But these words of the carnal pen would express no more than part of those facts, as to spirit-brides, which are held by such exalted sects as the Ebelians and the Perfectionists. Indeed, a theory which was simply silly and indecent, could hardly have arisen in any church of the Teutonic race. That the doctrine of a new relation of woman to man, called Spiritual wifehood, has so risen, is an undoubted fact. Be it bad, or be it good, this doctrine of spirit-brides is a product, not of the world and the flesh, but of the church and the spirit; a fact which forces it within the scope of our moral science, and renders it worthy of our keenest study. No one can deny that the advocates of Spiritual wifehood are, and have been, for the most part ministers of the gospel, men of thought and learning, men trained in our schools, armed with

our diplomas, and actually charged with the cure of souls. To some of these men, perhaps to all of them, the theory presents an aspect and receives a sanction wholly unlike what they appear when seen by the carnal mind. If it were not so, it would still be worth some effort to comprehend; since the moralist would like to know by what train of reasoning scholars and preachers could be brought to see their good in evil things, and women of blameless life could be induced to live in a state which some men do not shrink from calling one of public shame. But we can hardly doubt the sincerity of men who live according to their lights, when they have to do so to their grievous loss.

The higher theory of Spiritual wives may be stated in a few words. The common notion of a legal union between man and woman is an act of pairing for life. At the altar we promise to take each other for good and ill, for better and worse, engaging before the world to dwell together, cleaving one to the other, and to none else, until death shall part us. What do we mean by these large words? That we take each other for life and for life only? That the bargain made in time is only good for time? That the affections, and the ties

which bind them, cease with the grave? In short, do we mean that marriage is a temporary bond which has no part in our eternal life? This is the usual teaching of the schools; and in all those countries where the Church still reigns and rules, this view of the marriage vow is never impeached by adverse decisions in a court of law. The vow is for life, and for the whole of life. If it lasts until the grave, it ends with the grave. The Latin maxim is, Once married, always married. "What God has bound let no man put asunder," says the Western Church. The husband shall be to his wife, the wife shall be to her husband only, until death shall break the seal, and tear the record. So far runs the contract, and no farther. Death only makes men free.

Now, this theory of a marriage vow being good for life—and only for life—is more than simply unsatisfactory to men and women of a certain type of mind; it is absolutely repulsive. Husbands who care nothing for their wives, wives who care little for their husbands, may learn to bear it. When there is no rich estate of love, no subtle yearning, no blended life, between the two sexes, they can look forward to the grave as to an end of their wedded bonds, if not with ardour, yet still without

agony of soul. But then, as the mystics say, in such a case, there has been no true marriage, either first or last. Such unions, they allege, are only partnerships in business and estate. Two properties, perhaps, have been made one; two family lines may have run into one stream; a dull and legal act having been solemnized with religious forms, and beautified by orange-blossoms and bridal benedictions. Such an affair of trade, it is alleged, may end most fitly with the hearse and shroud. But when a marriage of true hearts has been blessed throughout by love, as well as by the priest; when two young souls have grown one in feeling, in desire, in aspirations; then, the thought of either husband or wife ever ceasing to hold that dear relation to the other, is hardly to be borne. The spirit kicks against that doctrine of a life apart, even when the promise is that it shall be passed in a brighter and better world. Love, wanting no brighter world, refuses to admit the thought of a separated life. To true mates marriage is not for the time now only, but for the time to come. Carnal ideas have no dominion in the sphere of love. Once bound to each other, true mates desire to be always bound. Love seeks no change; and why, if love is eternal, should the

union which makes it visible end with the greater sleep? Men, it is alleged, who have found their mates on earth can never fall back into such a view. To their eyes wedlock is a covenant of soul with soul, made for all worlds in which there is conscious life; for the heavens above no less than for the earth below.

It is allowed that this theory of the lasting bonds of love may have its darker side. All men and women are not happy in their chains. To many, marriage is a mistake; for men propose, and women accept, too much by chance; often in haste, sometimes in ignorance, occasionally in pique. Misery follows; for unions such as these are certainly not made in heaven. What then? Have we two kinds of marriage?—one in which the happy lovers find their dearest bliss in the hope of an unchanging state; a second, in which the luckless partners wait in weariness of spirit for the divorce that only comes by death? Who, say these advocates of celestial love, can doubt it? Two orders of marriage may be seen in every street. One match is happy, another hapless. Here, then, lies the grand distinction in the lives of men and women on this planet:—Are they truly mated?

In England, the reading and writing public have scarcely entered yet upon these questions. In Germany they have been more debated, and the public feeling has found expression both in the church and in the courts of law. But still, it is mainly in the New World that the subject is being wrought out in a thousand busy brains, and by a thousand busy pens. Pious souls in Boston and New York are asking, "Does a true marriage on earth imply a true marriage in heaven? Can there be a true marriage of the body without a binding covenant for the soul? Is not the real marriage always that of the soul? Are not all unions which are of the body only, false unions?" Such are the questions put and answered, not only by writers like Lizzie Doten and Cora Hatch, leaders in what is known in New York as the Progressive School, but by religious teachers and preachers like Lucina Umphreville and Mary Lincoln. Such ladies answer boldly that all true marriages are good for time and for eternity; that all natural unions, in which like clings to like, are true unions; and that all other combinations of the two sexes, even though they have even sanctioned by the law and blessed by the Church, are null and void.

In England these revival zealots have done a little: in Germany they have done a good deal. There is no need to exaggerate their power. Ebel and Diestel, though they had a great success, and disturbed the secular universities of Germany, have gone to their rest, appearing to have left behind them little beyond the memory of a great trial, a few noble zealots in Königsberg, Hanover, Elberfeld, and Dresden, and a library of acrimonious pamphlets from the press. The teaching of Prince and Starky is a sign, the meaning of which we should try to master by a careful study of the facts; but it is not likely to destroy the English rite. In Europe, the old forms of society are too strong for this innovating religious spirit to make swift and certain head. Our cities are full; every inch of ground has its guard; every opinion may be said to lie entrenched. Only those missionaries who labour among the poor, and who promise their hearers a brighter earth, can make much way. Our canons are in force, and our corporations strong. Every man is a spy on his fellow; and a majority of men in the higher ranks have nothing to hope, and everything to fear, from change. In such a society, where

shall we find room for a new light, a new liberty, a new gospel?

In America, the field lies open. There the space is vast, the population sparse, the order new, the custom lax. The hamlet knows neither squire nor thrall. No venerable spire, no picturesque rectory, no storied tomb, invests the village pastor with something of a father's power. No man cares to ask what his neighbour thinks; and only under pressure of great excitement, ever dreams of interfering with what he says or does. In matters of religion, even more than in others, a Yankee is taught by his circumstances to give and take.

The way in which people come together in a new place compels them to adopt a tolerant habit of mind, not only in respect to doctrine, but to all that flows from doctrine. Some dashing fellow in quest of fortune falls on a good thing; it may be a sheep-run, a waterfall, a petroleum-well, a coal-field, a pine-wood, an alluvial bottom; he builds a shed on the spot; he calls in his friends; he sends the news of his good luck about, and in a few months a crowd of settlers may have squatted round his shed. Shanties are built, and streets laid out. A store is run up, a post-office is opened, a forge is built. Corner lots are marked for sale;

the mule-track is beaten into a road. If the good thing turns out well, a home is made in the great waste; but for years it may be doubtful whether the new thing is good or not; therefore, whether the place will grow into a city, or relapse to the brambles and the wolves. Meantime the children need a school, the women want a church. How are the men to satisfy these wants? Among the fifty families drawn to the spot, there may be members of twenty different sects. In New York they would hardly sit on the same bench; in New Haven they would (metaphorically) tear each other's hair. But when they get away into the Western country, they have neither time nor wish to indulge in these luxuries of city life. Tented on the edge of the desert, with the wolf and the redskin prowling near their farms, their days and nights have to be spent in a round of mutual watchfulness and mutual help. Their passion spends itself on nature, and when they want to curse an enemy, they fall upon the Indian brave. Being laymen, not much read in divinity, they find that some rough compromise of form and faith may be easily made, if not easily kept. All Yankees who go to church delight in singing and in prayer, for which they seem to enjoy some special gifts. The Psalms of David

and the Lord's Prayer supply them with the bases of a common service, suited to their simple tastes. A chapter from the Bible read by some farmer, with now and then a sermon from a preacher who chances to come that way, and is willing to oblige, satisfies their spiritual wants. The wanderer may preach any doctrine or no doctrine; he may belong to any sect or to no sect; if the people like what he says, they will give him his dinner and dollar; if they like him very much, they may invite him to stay among them, and when they feel strong enough to build, they may raise him a log-church. It is in this simple way, and by this natural law, that churches grow in the great Western country; not from the choice of those who make them, but from the pressure of a force beyond man's will. In all these churches, the preacher is of more importance than his book; the man rules in place of the canon; hence the widest field is thrown open to personal daring, personal genius, and even personal freak.

Thus we may comprehend how wide and lasting may have been the effect of a revival which turned half the higher ranks of this people, both men and women, into preachers.

One result of this great revival was to bring into existence the Perfect Church. This church, professing to be holy, and claiming to be founded on the writings of St. Paul, was parted from the first into two branches; the New York Branch, of which Hiram Sheldon was the chief; the New Haven Branch, of which Father Noyes was the chief. Both these churches ran into some form of either Socialism or Spiritualism.

After this great revival, ending in a new Pauline Church, had spent itself, a great reaction set in. Paul was put away in face of Owen, Fourier, and Davis, and the professors of holiness were jostled by scientific socialists and table-turning spirits.

Judge Edmonds recently declared that in the United States four millions of men and women believe in spirits.

Warren Chace affirms that all these Spiritualists accept the doctrine of special affinities between man and woman; affinities which imply a spiritual relation of the sexes higher and holier than that of marriage.

One assertion may be high above, the second may be much beside, the mark; yet no one who knows the facts can doubt that in America

great numbers of men and women put their faith in spirits, and that among these men and women not a few accept the doctrine of natural mates. Such women believe in spiritual husbands; such men believe in spiritual wives. All these persons are known to be restive in the married state. During the late war, a Southern paper took some pains to show that in a given year more wives ran away from their husbands in the North than slaves from their masters in the South.

Whence has come this Spiritual movement? Who shall say? Of one fact we are sure. Spiritual wives were known among the Ebelians, in the high circles of Ost Preussen, twenty years before the name was heard in either Massachusetts or New York.

CHAPTER X.

A STUDENT OF THEOLOGY.

JOHANNES WILHELM EBEL, a man descending from a long line of humble and pious clergymen, was born in 1784, in the Pfarr-house, his father's manse, at Passenheim, one of the many small lake-towns which exist in the province of Ost Preussen, near the Polish frontier. His father was a country clergyman; and his grandfather, now an old man, had also been a country clergyman; but was suspended from his office of preacher on account of certain mystical ideas which he had made public on the coming of a Paraclete in the flesh. From this old man the child may have derived a turn for dreamy speculation.

Wilhelm was a lovely child, and grew up to be a very handsome youth. Born in a pastor's family, he was used to the saying of prayers and the singing of hymns from his cradle. When he was ten years old, he knew much of the Scriptures by

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heart; being able to repeat long passages by rote, most of all from the Psalms, the Prophets, and the Song of Songs. In his reading of the New Testament, he showed a strong preference for the Book of Revelation and for the Gospel of St. John.

When he was sent, as a lad of parts, to the local school, he showed by so many signs his tendency towards a learned life, that the good pastor, his father, was advised by his neighbours to send him up from the dull lake-town on the Polish frontier, a place of peasants and fishermen, to the brilliant capital of Ost Preussen, in which Immanuel Kant was then lecturing on logic and philosophy to crowds of students, whom his genius had drawn from every town in the old Fatherland of Ost Preussen.

Though the good pastor was proud of his son, he was also full of fears. The spirit of the great city was sceptical and materialistic; earnest religion was a thing unknown; the theological classes were despised by students of medicine and law; and even in the chairs of divinity there was neither light nor zeal. Yet, he gave way at last; in the hope that his boy would keep a pure heart in the city, and become a useful servant to his Church and his God.

He was a poor lad, with a great talent for getting on. The life of a student of divinity was in those times hard enough; for the students were drawn as a rule from the humbler ranks; from the homes of small farmers, citizens, and tradesmen; and most of them had to go through their course on incomes of ten or twelve pounds a-year. A lad paid eighteen pence a-week for his room; he got his dinner at the free-table of his college (which our friends here call the Convicts' table); he borrowed such books as he might need; and he procured from the professor a remission of his fees. The chief expenditure was in beer. Nearly all German students range themselves into clubs, or sets, which meet in the evening two or three times a-week, to talk politics, to chop logic, to smoke pipes, and to drink small beer. This beer is cheap; but then the thirst for it is great; since a learned man, engaged in either singing a patriotic song or demonstrating the subjectivity of matter, requires not less in the course of a long evening than a dozen pints. Ebel, a student in theology, would have to take his place in one of the poorest of these college clubs.

This was not a thing to gall him. He knew his place, and kept it, until a chance should come

in his way to rise. What moved his soul, was to find how many of his fellow-students, youths who were going into the church, laughed at his prayers, and made a burlesque of the Bible. Even in the higher forms of divinity he met with men who placed the Critique of Pure Reason high above the Word of God. How could he square such preference with the lessons which he had learned in his father's house?

In those hard times, Wilhelm could not pretend to say that his soul was free and his mind at rest. They were not. Doubts still haunted him. Who could unveil to him the mystery of life? who could explain the innermost soul of things? who had yet fathomed the destiny of man? in what learned book could he find secular knowledge made one with celestial love?

In fact, while the lad was plagued in his conscience by a thousand fears, he was forced to admit that some of those rationalistic scoffers, who drank much beer and made much fun of him in their cups, had an easy task in pointing out the many dangers which beset our attempts to justify the ways of God to man. But the secular knowledge which he was fast acquiring in the class-rooms of Königsberg, instead of choking in him, as in many

young fellows, the good seed sown in his heart by early study and parental care, only served to supply these living germs with plenty of nourishing soil and refreshing rain. While he paid such attention as he must do to language, history, and logic, so as to win his B. A. degree, his favourite reading lay among the early Fathers and the old German divines. He pored over the lives of saints. He copied and pondered the speculations of mystics. He gave up his days to reveries and dreams. He found in these contemplations, if not a way out of all his troubles, a peace which the world could neither give nor take away. Yet he led, on the whole, an active and a fruitful life; for even in these early years the young student of divinity was engaged as a private tutor in noble families, and as a religious instructor in ladies' schools.

One of the patrons whom he gained in these early days was the Graf zu Dohna-Schlodien, a member of one of those mediatized princely families who still retained, in social matters, their sovereign rank. The Dohnas were connected by marriage with the reigning house. Ebel became private tutor to the prince's sons, and when the boys had finished their course of home-study, Dohna appointed Ebel, as a reward for his labour, to the curacy of Herms-

dorf, the living of which was in his gift. After some doubts, Ebel accepted this charge of souls; but he missed the city life and the ladies' schools; and when a chair fell vacant in the Friedrich's College, a gymnasium in the Burg Platz, with a church attached to it, he resigned his living at Hermsdorf for a smaller stipend and a larger sphere. His church in the city was obscure; but the young preacher very soon filled it with an eager and admiring crowd; drawing ladies of rank and fashion away from the cathedral and the Altstadt church into the Burg Platz.

Yet his mind was vexed by many doubts: not by doubts of the primary order, which, when they exist at all, must have a spiritual source; for his mind was clear as to the love of God, the resurrection of Christ, the life of a world to come; but by doubts of the secondary order, such as, when they exist at all, must have a scientific source: for he had not learned to grasp those vague phenomena, known as the nature of things and the destiny of man.

When Ebel had a few days of leisure from duty, he would run down from the great city in which he was now become a shining light, to the lake-town, where he could talk with his father about

his prospects and his griefs. The poor pastor listened to his tale; laden with a trouble so unlike his own; which arose, for the most part, from his frequent failures to make five thalers go as far as ten. Under his father's roof in Passenheim, Ebel heard the name of a man who was to shape the course of his future life. This man was said to have solved the mystery of the universe: having hit upon a great secret, by means of which he could explain the nature of things, reconcile philosophy with religion, and harmonise liberty with grace.

The name of this man was Johann Heinrich Schönherr; of which the young student made a note.

On Ebel's return to Königsberg, a great promotion for so young a preacher fell in his way. The post of an Adjuncten-stelle, deacon's assistant, had become vacant in the Altstadt church: that high place in which, after the old fashion of a Prussian field-day, the cream of society were wont to offer up, in fur coats and pink bonnets, the sacrifice of a contrite heart. To these high-born people the deacon's assistant had to preach: an office which was not an easy one to fill: even when he could do his duty in the usual way,

with a dull formality, only just relieved from drowsiness by secular art and wit. Provincial countesses are everywhere hard to please: and they are most of all hard to please when they live in a great city, far from the capital, yet vying with the metropolis in education and in taste. Nothing less than a man of fine figure, of winning manners, and of eloquent tongue, could satisfy the fair critics of the Old Town church.

All these things they found in the young and eloquent Professor of Religion in the Friedrich's College, whose chief duties had hitherto lain in visiting ladies' schools and teaching boyish counts the elements of their creed. A crowd of candidates presented themselves for selection, and from this crowd of candidates Wilhelm Ebel carried away the prize.

Tall, stately, gracious; a fair scholar; an eloquent preacher, with a touch of roughness in his style; the young deacon's assistant proved himself the very man for his high post. The great church filled with hearers; Ebel's sermons became popular; and his sayings in the pulpit were carried about the streets. For the young assistant was bold, sentimental, and original; never scrupling to throw into his most solemn passages a homely

phrase, an old saw, a snatch of song, even a touch of comedy, which all but forced his hearers into shouts of mirth. He could be as grave as Stanley, as sportive as Spurgeon; but the aim of all his efforts seemed to be the awakening of souls to a quicker sense of the religious life.

This church, in which his vocation had come to lie, was known in the city as a ladies' church; and Wilhelm Ebel was in every way a lady's man. From his father's father, a pietist and a mystic, who had dreamed strange dreams and seen strange visions, a prophet who had toyed with the Book of Revelations, and had ventured on predictions which were never verified in fact, Ebel had derived the warm spirit of a believer in things unseen; a spirit which is said to exercise the most stupendous power upon a certain class of female minds.

Ebel had been a dreamer from his youth; and he never ceased to dream until he met, in the living flesh, that strange man of whom he had heard, in the Passenheim manse, as having made a wonderful discovery, by which he could reconcile freedom with authority, and man with God.

This man he encountered on the Pregel wharf, preaching his gospel to a crowd of sailors, carpenters, and clerks.

CHAPTER XI.

THE PAUPER PARACLETE.

SCHÖNHERR was not the original name of this man's family; but one which had been given to his father, a pious and stalwart grenadier in one of Father Fritz's infantry battalions, on account of his good looks. The handsome grenadier had been called Schönhagen; but, on being taken prisoner by the Austrians in Silesia, he had received from his captors the complimentary name of Schönherr; by which his son, the Pauper Paraclete, is known.

This son, Johann Heinrich Schönherr, was born at Memel on the Russian frontier, in 1771; the year of Father Fritz's entry into Poland. The mother, whose maiden name was Demoiselle Olk, a woman of deep piety, was of Angerburg, a town in Ost Preussen; to which place after the birth of their son, the young couple had retired. When the lad was fifteen years old, he had been sent to the

capital to learn a trade. Pleased to see the fine city, to hear the great preachers, to watch the students and professors, Schönherr had still a soul above carpentry and suchlike. So he read the Bible when he should have been minding his work, and lingered about the colleges, asking questions which nobody could answer, when he ought to have been counting his groschen. Of books he knew little; but the debates which took him most were such as the working classes fancied were then being raised by Immanuel Kant. As he grew more and more unquiet, it occurred to him, as a novelty, that a little reading might do him good. Then it came into his mind that he would read about good and evil, about faith and works, and become a shining light in the religious world.

After having wasted two whole years in dawdling about the gardens and the bridges, he went back to Angerburg, and told the old grenadier that he wanted to preach, and not to work.

To this end he must go to school; since in Prussia no one is allowed to teach others who has not himself been taught. A school might easily be found in Königsberg, the city of colleges and schools, even for persons of the poorest and most unlettered class. Lowest of all these schools was

the pauper-house, in the Altstadt; a place to which every child was admitted, not only without payment, but without examination; and in which he was not only taught, but fed. To this refuge for ignorant and destitute lads, Schönherr went at the age of seventeen, hoping, in a few months of study, to prepare himself for admission into a higher school. But his chance of living a scholar's life was gone by; he was too old to begin a regular course of study. In the pauper-house he stayed two years; trying to read books on theology and divinity; and finding them hard to understand. At length, he gave them up, observing that the Bible was false, and that theology and divinity were only tricks of speech. He could not make up his mind, he said, to become a teacher of things which he knew to be wrong.

When he was about twenty-one years old, he began to sit in the philosophical classes of the University, and to ask questions of the professors about the immortality of the soul, and the eternal destiny of things. They told him to read, and they gave him lists of books to consult; which he thought was a mean subterfuge on their part. After the first half-term he threw philosophy to the

winds, as he had previously thrown divinity to the winds. Was this empty jargon all? Were these Königsberg pretenders the only learned men? He would go into the world and see; so, taking up his staff and wallet, he trudged, as only a German student can trudge, to the university towns of Greifswalde in Pomerania, and to Rostock in Mecklenberg, seeking for a better light. At Rostock he found his money failing him; and with a stomach as empty and craving as his head, he walked thence through Hanover to Lemgo, in Lippe Detmold, famous for the turning of meerschaum pipes, where some of his kinsfolk lived. These good people gave him a few thalers, and sent him on to Rinteln, a small town on the Weser, by the bank of which stream he made that grand discovery of the dual principle of nature, the masculine and feminine elements in things, which was to occupy the Royal Court of Justice in Berlin for so many years.

The poor lad was sitting by the margin of a pool, when he noticed some plants floating in the water, and the question came to his lips,—"How do they grow there?"

As he pondered on the mystery, a voice

awoke in his consciousness and said, "It is water."

He listened to it once again. "As it grows, so it has grown," said the voice. Schönherr would not believe it; but on trying to find arguments in his brain against what the voice had said, he could not. Pondering much on this great principle of being, he came to own that it must be true. "Rain, dew, every moisture needed by plants—every shoot which, the younger it is, the more full of juice it is—everything was clear." This law of life, then, so clear to Schönherr, was the first principle of the universe; that he could see; but he could not tell as yet how the solid world could have arisen out of the liquid, the plant out of the pond. This trouble was soon ended. How does the perfume escape from plants?

Ah, he cried in ecstasy, by the warmth! "Sun, fire, light,—all of which come from a single principle,—Light—solidify the moist." Now he felt that he had got the results of nature in his grasp. Light is the male, the vivifier; Water the female, the nurse. Eureka! These two arch-beings —the supreme male and the supreme female—bound in eternal and in necessary wedlock, explain everything; for in this great wedlock of principles

lies the only chance of the seed of things being brought to life.

Schönherr felt that this sudden gift of insight was no accident of time and place. It must be more; a revelation from on high; a working of celestial love in his soul; a pouring of the divine will into his spirit. To what end could these gifts be sent? Why was he chosen, and for what? Could these things be done of God for any other purpose than to prepare the world for His coming? And what was he who had been called and sanctified to do His will? The divine being must work through a divine agent. Was not he, then—he, the selected one—the Paraclete made flesh?

Armed with this great discovery of the two arch-beings—the light and the water, the male and the female—which he thought would quickly replace the crude jargon taught in the schools under the names of science and divinity, the Pauper Paraclete walked to Göttingen, to Jena, to Leipsic, to Königsberg; in each of which cities he explained his dual doctrine, and announced himself as the Paraclete made flesh. As he trudged along the road, he called on the village pastors, and made known to them his message; begging food and drink; and telling the divines they must either

accept him as the Paraclete, or be damned. One poor fellow whom he threatened with the divine vengeance, was sore afraid; for Schönherr told him in sepulchral tones, that, if he refused to believe in light and water, the Father would that day strike him dead. The pastor begged for a few minutes to say his prayers; in praying he recovered his strength; and when he rose from his knees, he kicked his visitor down the stairs.

In Leipsic, Schönherr made a friend, if not a convert, in Herr Sachse, who listened with wonder to his tale of how a man may come to a knowledge of the truth: not by inquiry, not by logic, not by travel; but by a simple exercise of faith. Schönherr said it had been given him to know what was true and what was false; for his eyes had been opened by the Lord, and men who would be saved from death must take him at his word. He was the Paraclete; and the Paraclete asked no proof beyond itself. The sun requires no witness of its warmth. One morning, after a snow-storm, the prophet, entering into Sachse's room, asked him which was the highest mountain in Thuringia; on which Sachse named the Kyffhäuser, the famous hill of Barbarossa. "I must go to it," said his friend. Sachse, thinking him

faint from hunger—his old complaint—called for a flask of wine, and poured it into a glass which happened to have the shape of a chalice. Schönherr snatched the glass, and offered the wine to Sachse in the manner of a sacrament, saying:—

"O God, how wonderful are thy ways!"

Sachse, under the fear that he was mad, procured an order for his confinement; took him, on pretence of a walk, to the asylum; and then told him that for the moment he was not free to go away.

"The friend I loved most betrays me," cried the poor prophet; who sat down and wept.

In his mild prison Schönherr began a forty days' fast of purification; for four whole days he took no food, either meat or drink; and would certainly have died, but for the lucky suggestion of a disciple, who told him that all the holy prophets ate honey, a celestial manna which could not break his fast. Seeing that the Pauper Paraclete was gentle and harmless, people felt compassion for his case, and some charitable souls gave him money enough to buy food and drink for as many days as it would take him to walk home from Leipsic to Königsberg; a city which he always

described as his native place. In passing through Berlin, he excited some attention; for the Pauper Prophet was tall and handsome like his father the grenadier; and like the old Letts of Ost Preussen, he wore his beard down to his waist, his gabardine to his feet.

On reaching Königsberg, he found that his fame had come before him; and he made the acquaintance of two or three young divines; among others of Wilhelm Ebel, Hermann Olshausen, and Heinrich Diestel; young men, students of divinity, who were drawn to him mainly by a doctrine which he derived from his theory of the two arch-beings, light and water; namely, that the day of carnal love is past, and that all the love permitted in a true Christian commonwealth is Spiritual love.

Ebel, who was now getting on as a preacher, introduced him to Graf von Kanitz, whom he recognised as an angel in the Apocalypse, and to Fräulein Minna von Derschau, in whom he saw the Bride of the Lamb. Through these great persons the Pauper Paraclete might have been able to push his way; but that he chose to find his friends among the poorer ranks, among the boatmen of the Pregel, the glovers in the Löbenicht, the peasants from the surrounding farms; whom it was his

pride to gather about him; and who liked to drink their beer and smoke their pipes, while listening to his sermons on the Book of Revelation and on the coming of the Judgment Day.

With Schönherr's gift of insight, it was easy to read the mysteries of the seals. All the men who came about him were identified by him as angels in the Apocalypse. Ebel was the first witness; Kanitz was an angel; Diestel was known as the opener of the Seventh Seal; and Schönherr changed the name of this eminent disciple from Heinrich Diestel into Heinrich Siegelbrecher—Henry the Unsealer.

With the exception of a short piece of writing called The Victory of Divine Revelation, Schönherr confined his efforts to the platform; from which he preached two free sermons a-week to anybody who would come to hear him. Some of these sermons were preached at midnight. The tall figure; the long beard; the masses of curly hair, covering his shoulders like a mantilla; the broad-brimmed hat, under which beamed a striking face; the garb of Oriental cut, impressed the eyes of a stranger. In the pulpit, he was very powerful; most of all so when he knelt in prayer, for which he seemed to have a special gift. The clergy were

not unkind to him; even the philosophers treated him with the forbearance due to an idiot. One day he went to Immanuel Kant; to whom he wished to make known his great secret that all living things consist of light and water. "Very well," said the expounder of Pure Reason; "have you tried to live on them?"

It was a new idea to Schönherr, who went home and tried the experiment for three whole days, when he became too weak to resist, and the people about him thrust some food into his mouth.

He never married, because he thought marriage useless, if not wrong. Once he fell into love; fancying it might be pleasant to have a wife in his lowly house. The lady on whom he smiled was Minna von Derschau, the lovely and high-born girl whom he had recognised as Bride of the Lamb. Her father, Major von Derschau, had been killed in the field, and while she was suffering in heart from this terrible loss, the old fellow made his offer, and she consented to become his wife. Friends, however, came between them; since the only marriage he could offer her was a Spiritual union; no closer and warmer than a Shaker bond. The young lady was now kept away from Schönherr's conventicle; and the preacher him-

self, who had perhaps been afraid of his folly, gave out that these bridals had been put off by a messenger from on high. In his sermons he had always held to the dogma that the days of marriage are gone by; that in the new heaven and the new earth there will be neither marrying nor giving in marriage; and that the desire of men and women to become husbands and wives is a sign of Beelzebub's empire in the heart.

Some persons in Ost Preussen, crazier than the Pauper Paraclete himself, called upon Archbishop Börowski to arrest and bring him to trial for blasphemy, in calling himself the Paraclete made flesh; but this sage ecclesiastic, after making some inquiries about him in the city, refused to set the law in motion against a man who seemed to believe in what he said, and who appeared to be doing no harm. Archbishops are not so easily led away by passion as men of inferior rank in the Church.

Attempts were made to ruin him through a still higher quarter. On King Friedrich Wilhelm III. paying a visit to his royal city of Königsberg, some foolish people insisted on thrusting the ravings of this poor Paraclete on his majesty's notice. Daniel Schleiermacher, the renowned theo-

logian, said a few words to the King in Schönherr's behalf; and the Graf von Dohna-Schlobitten, as the King's minister, issued a royal rescript, commanding that the poor preacher should be left alone, on the ground that his intentions were good and his theories harmless.

One of Schönherr's crotchets in his later days was to build a new vessel on the Pregel; such a model as the world had never seen; a cross between Noah's ark and a modern steamer. All his orders about this boat had been taken in a dream. It was to be called the "Swan:" and was to be built in faith: in that faith which removes mountains. It was to be a celestial ship, with the power of sailing against wind and tide, of moving without sails, without oars, without horses; yet surpassing in speed the smartest clipper in the Baltic Sea. Strange to say, he found men on the Pregel wharf who had faith enough in his teaching to carry out these plans. The merchants gave him timber, the artisans lent their skill. The ark was actually built and launched. Unhappily, the men who worked upon the model had done so in a worldly spirit, and not in the faith which works miracles. When it was put upon the water it would not float; it sank into the mud, and lay

near the Pregel bridge until it was broken up. Such are the effects of unbelief!

To the last day of his life the Pauper Paraclete asserted that he could never die, seeing that he had already died, and been born again. With this assertion on his lips, he passed away at Juditten, near Königsberg, at the premature age of fifty-five.

CHAPTER XII.

ARCHDEACON EBEL.

It will always serve as a puzzle for ingenious men to explain how a student of Ebel's powers should have been led to accept this jargon about light and water as a true system of philosophy; still more, how a divine with Ebel's conservative opinions, and his prospects in the world, could have been persuaded to place himself by the side of an unlettered and starving fanatic.

The Pauper Paraclete seems to have been a man of extraordinary nervous power. I have met with a dozen persons in this city—bankers and merchants —who hold, in spite of his failures, that Schönherr, though not the Paraclete made flesh, was a divinely-gifted man. It should be said, in explanation of Ebel's attachment to him, that some of Schönherr's wildest doings, like the craft which he caused to be built on the Pregel, were things of his later years; done after Ebel, Diestel, Kanitz,

and his saner friends had left him in despair. Yet, even when all is said, the case remains a moral puzzle; since the fact remains, that a very keen student of science and divinity was brought to believe in these ravings as in a second gospel, and a man of aristocratic leanings, with fair prospects in the Church, was persuaded to sit at a dreamer's feet and a beggar's board.

From the day of his conversion to the theory of light and water, and to the dogma of a Paraclete made flesh, Ebel attached himself to his master, standing by him on the quays, sitting under him in the pot-house, preaching his doctrine, fighting his battles, trudging with him on his journeys, putting himself under Schönherr, and striving to become to him all that Timothy had been to Paul. When Ebel was in his twenty-fifth year he made a public declaration of his belief in the system of nature—in the dual principle—taught by the Pauper Paraclete: a proceeding which gave high offence to his superiors in the Church. These gentlemen found means to annoy him in many ways. They questioned his views; they condemned his zeal; they challenged his orthodoxy. But as he walked among them with a wary step, they found no way to deprive him of his clerical office. When their

malice failed on that side, they commenced a sharp inquiry into the tenets held by Schönherr, hoping to find something in them which Ebel could not justify, and would not like to disown. This inquiry failed; for it was shown, in defence of Schönherr, that the cosmogonical views of the Pauper Prophet were such as lent support to Bible truth against the spurious science which was then being taught from the professor's chair. Not only was Schönherr freed from blame, but the attention of theologians was drawn to him more and more. From that time Ebel assumed in his discourses a bolder tone.

In the year 1816, when the great war was closed, and the German cities were opening to a fresher and freer life, the Pauper Paraclete and his chief disciple started on what they hoped would be a long and blessed journey. Schönherr was to be the prophet, Ebel the witness, of a new dispensation. They took little care for their daily needs; they meant to beg their bread, like the old German ascetics; and they carried from Königsberg little beyond their wallets and staves. A converted varnish-maker, named Clemens, was their sole companion. These wandering preachers found their way through heat and dust, through

frost and rain, to Berlin, to Dresden, to Breslau, hoping in every place to find princes and people equally eager for the new light, thirsting for the new water, which alone could give them peace. In these proud cities they met with no success; the people being drunk with joy at their great revenge; and in no such mood as might induce them to consider the principles of things. The apostles turned from these cities into the country hamlets; to the lonely castle, to the secluded farm; and in one of these hamlets, in a baronial Schloss, they met with a young and beautiful woman, who was to influence both their lives, and especially Ebel's life.

Though the two wandering apostles found this young lady living in a Silesian castle, she was one of their own country-women, a Prussian of Königsberg. Her name was Ida; her rank that of Countess von der Gröben.

In those days the highest person in Ost Preussen society was von Auerswald, Ober-Präsident of the province. Though not very rich, he was of noble family, and stood high in favour; the Princess of Prussia being his warm admirer and constant friend. This great lady had raised him to power in Königsberg; first as

Oberbürg-meister in the city, then as Ober-Präsident in the province. Being the first personage in Königsberg, Auerswald lived in the royal Schloss, surrounded by the state of a petty prince, and blessed in the love of a family circle, noted for the talent of its young men and the beauty of its young women. His sons, Rudolph and Alfred, have lived to become famous in the history of Prussia; Rudolph as minister of the Revolution in 1848, and Alfred as a leading politician, who has not taken office. His eldest daughter, Fräulein von Auerswald, married Theodor von Schön, a young man of brilliant promise, who was to be his own successor in the high post of Ober-Präsident. A second daughter, Ernestine, married Herr von Bardeleben, a man of rank and wealth. Ida, his third daughter, a peerless beauty, of nervous temperament and delicate frame, exceedingly sensitive to sounds and scents, to changes in the weather, and to moral appeals, had been followed by all the young nobles of Ost Preussen, until the lovely girl had given her love away to the young and handsome Graf von der Gröben, a man of large estates and of very high blood, with whom she lived in the perfect bliss of wedded life, until the great uprising of her country against

the French took place. That patriotic rising had wrecked her peace. Königsberg boasts, and truly, that she sent the first volunteers into the field against Napoleon. Ida, living in the centre of these great passions, was glad to send her husband, like all her kinsmen, into the service of her native land. On the field of Lützen, in the first great battle of the war, he fell, leaving his beautiful wife with a great fortune, a small family, and a broken heart.

To this fair widow no one had been able to whisper peace. Three years had passed since she had sent her hero forth to die, and in all that time she had not been herself for a single day. Nothing remained of her except the beauty of her face. Her father had done his best. The family of her dead husband had tried their skill. She had listened to their words with a dull ear, and obeyed their counsels with a weary foot. In vain she had gone back to the Schloss; in vain she had striven to appear in society; in vain she had battled with her nerves and struggled to repress her tears. From all these trials she had turned back to her dark home in Silesia: to the place which had become sacred to her heart from the remembrance of her married joy and her fatal loss.

There she could resign herself to grief; for there she stood alone by the dead. Her father had given up the fond hope of ever again seeing his darling child in her old light moods; when he suddenly heard from Silesia that a religious man had come to her country-house, who seemed to have power upon her spirit; which power he was using with great success to rouse her energies, and restore her to health and life. This news inspired the Ober-Präsident and his family with joy.

After a few months had passed, the Countess Ida returned to Königsberg, with Ebel and Schönherr in her train. The cure effected in her case was perfect. Instead of the melancholy and fantastic countess, over whom her family had mourned since the terrible day of Lützen, she appeared among them now in her old habit; tender, soft, serene, and almost gay. The poetic selfishness of grief had passed away. All that she had been to her father in old times, she became again; with a grave gentleness that flung about her a charm which every one could feel and no one could describe. Ebel seemed to have enchanted her; and all the family admitted that this work of his hands was very good.

On the arrival of this great lady and her two

male companions in Königsberg, the old man went his way; going back to his artisans and his lecture-rooms, and setting up his trade of ark-builder on the principle of navigation by faith. The young man held on to his noble convert, seeing her daily at the royal Schloss, where he soon became a friend and favourite in the best society of Königsberg. Graf von Kanitz represents Ebel as having made the acquaintance of von Auerswald at an earlier time; this is not the general belief; anyway, it is certain that Auerswald never tired of doing service to the man who had given him a daughter whom he had mourned as lost. All the tribe of the von der Gröbens, a host in Ost Preussen, held themselves to be his debtors. Ida was the darling of all her kinsfolk, and she had only to smile in his favour to make his fortune. The Graf von Kanitz, the Graf von Finkenstein, the Graf von Münchow, took him by the hand. Fine ladies flocked to hear the preacher who had done such deeds; and, in one word, thanks to his fair friend, Wilhelm Ebel found himself the fashion and his kingdom made.

In the Church, his rise was now swift and high. Auerswald, as Ober-Präsident, was chairman

of the Consistorium, the clerical body which had charge of every young curate's fortunes. A minister in Berlin (the minister for ecclesiastical and medical affairs) has the nominal appointment of candidates in every part of the kingdom; but the real appointment lies with those who nominate and recommend, who in most cases must be men on the spot. Auerswald had no need to press the claims of his favourite. The very men who had found such fault with his sermons when he was chiefly known to them as a disciple of the Pauper Paraclete, awoke to a sudden sense of his merit, when they saw that the Ober-Präsident's daughter came down to the Altstadt church whenever it was Ebel's turn to preach. In a short time, by the help of warm words at court, the poor deacon's assistant became deacon and archdeacon in the fashionable church.

Ebel's merits were now confessed on every side. People might hate him; and many persons did hate him; not only for his own sake, but for that of the work in which he seemed to be engaged. Schönherr had confined his labours by a sort of preference which his training helps one to understand, to mechanics and small traders; Ebel, who was by calling and education a gentle-

man, turned by preference towards the higher classes. In Schönherr's hands the new religious movement might have been radical and popular; in Ebel's hands it was sure to become, what his enemies called it from the first, a feudal and reactionary movement.

As soon as Wilhelm Ebel had become chief of the Altstadt Church, all his great friends from the Schloss, from the barracks, from the public offices—all the blue blood of Ost Preussen—gathered around his pulpit; making of his congregation an assembly of counts and barons, of countesses and councillors' wives. The Ober-Präsident was sometimes there; the beautiful Ida was always there. Graf von Kanitz, Graf and Gräfin von Finkenstein, Graf von Münchow, Baron Ernst von Heyking, Fräulein Minna von Derschau, Fräulein Emilie von Schrötter, Fräulein Florelle von Larisch, all the highest and best-born personages, who danced at the Schloss and gave the tone to society, were sure to be present. That Altstadt Church was not a large building; everybody could not find a seat in its galleries and on its floor; but every man who meant to rise—every woman who wished to be thought well of in the world—desired to be a member of the body, since to sit under the fashionable

archdeacon was coming to be taken as a social distinction. Politics had much to do with this movement of the higher ranks. Ebel was by nature a conservative. In his friendly intercourse with Schönherr he strove to bring his master round to this view of things; to soften and elevate the elder mystic; but the Pauper Paraclete would not listen to his worldly and aspiring pupil; preferring the Coal Market to the Schloss, and the company of carters and peasants to that of courtiers and fine ladies. At length the pupil and his teacher had to part. It is said that the Countess Ida urged her friend to give up Schönherr, who was a low fellow, rude in speech, dirty in person, crazed in mind. On the eve of parting, Schönherr expressed some scorn of his old pupil: and, after he had once parted from him, never would consent to receive from him another visit, even when he stood in the greatest need. Ebel, it must be added, was a kind friend to his old master, in spite of these rebuffs, and sent him, in feigned names, many a trifling present, which was a comfort to the poor fanatic in his later days.

The strangeness of the doctrines taught in the Altstadt Church was also a great attraction;

since these doctrines touched the deepest feelings of every man and woman who had either a soul to lose, or a heart to give away. It was understood among them, that the real followers of the new gospel would be content not to marry; and if they were already married by the law, that they would prefer to live as though they were not. Desire was accounted a sign of the devil's empire in the heart; and to cast him out was considered as the noblest act of a Christian man. In the new life of the spirit, no love was sanctified except spiritual love. God's purposes in bidding our parents increase and replenish the earth had been fulfilled; so that, in the true Church of the Saints, there would be no more births and no more deaths.

CHAPTER XIII.

A FEMALE CHURCH.

When Ebel parted from Schönherr, the few persons of high rank who had been hearers of the Pauper Paraclete quitted his conventicle by the Pregel to follow the rising favourite of the Schloss, who had the tact to offer them a church, which should yet be a living power, after a pattern of their own. Graf von Kanitz and Fräulein Minna von Derschau, the most eminent of these persons, were the first to move away: Kanitz giving up his rank as angel; Minna sacrificing her prospects as reputed bride of the Lamb. Diestel, the seal-breaker, followed in a little while; a misfortune, perhaps, for Ebel, since this young clergyman was rude and disobedient, fiery, headstrong, and indiscreet. Diestel was a constant trouble to the new church, until Fräulein von Derschau, by a letter of stern remonstrance with him, brought him to his knees and a better mind. The young

lady had undertaken this office of rebuke, not only because she held it unfit for a man so good as the Archdeacon to be ruffled in soul by the offences of his inferiors, but also, and chiefly, because among the Ebelians it became a part of the woman's function to confess sinners, to inflict penance, and to grant absolution.

In Ebel's system women were to be nearly all in all. The chief laid himself out to act upon them, and through them upon the world. They stood nearest to him in rank; they shared his most secret thoughts; they were his friends, his counsellors, his agents. In a word, the Ebelians were a Female Church.

"I knew the Archdeacon in his younger time," said a lady of my acquaintance, on whom I called this morning; "he was a good young man; very handsome and winning; all the girls were in love with him." In those times Ebel wore his hair very long; it was dark curling hair, and it fell in ripples of shining coils around his neck. What was then thought very strange in a male he parted his hair down the centre of his head, like a young lady; and for this cause, among other reasons, he was said, when a youth, to resemble the portraits of St. John.

A niece of President —— tells me that in early life he was the teacher of religion in Ulrich's school (in the Reibnitzer strasse) to which she went as a girl; that he was adored by the young ladies; that no one could help loving him. The old lady says, that looking back upon those times now, she can hardly venture to say how much power he exercised over all the young women. "He enchanted the girls," she tells me; but she is sure that he engaged their affection only as an angel might have done, by his beauty of person, by his softness of voice, by his purity of soul. All the children, she says, used to run after him in the streets. In the schools, all the girls used to kiss him; in the chapels, all the women used to embrace him. His tones were very soft, his words were very warm. Every phrase that fell from his lips was treasured up by some delighted hearer. The words which he spoke might be common enough, but his air, his gesture, his inflection of voice, gave a meaning to them such as no phrases from less gifted lips would seem to have. Once the young teacher said to Fräulein A—— :—

"Why, my child, do you repeat my words?"

She could not tell him.

"I knew very well," she said to me; "yes, and

he knew it also ; but I feared to say, lest he should turn his face and his heart away from me."

"Why did you repeat them?" I venture to ask the lady.

"Because I thought they were blessed to me; because I thought they were like the words of our Lord."

"Is that, madam, your opinion still?"

"It is. Archdeacon Ebel, in his later days, was a man of many sorrows ; one who was sorely tried ; he has now gone to his rest ; and, as I hope myself for mercy, I believe he was a brave and a pious man, who, in everything he did on earth, believed that he was doing the will of God."

This tender regret for the Archdeacon I have heard in many houses from matrons of blameless life, who were not members of his church, and who only remember him as a sweet, benevolent person, with a smile on his face, and compassion in his heart for every one.

Three noble ladies entered into an engagement with each other to hold watch over him ; to be near him at all times ; to guard him from evil ; and to keep temptation from his path. These three ladies were the Countess von der Gröben, the Fräulein von Derschau, and the Fräulein von Schrötter.

They were his ministers and messengers, who were to stand by him, to serve him, and to do his bidding. Ebel used to say, that since his second birth of the spirit, the tendency towards his old life in the flesh, which he found most fatal to his peace, most difficult to put away, was his natural disposition to be very humble, to think little of himself, and to bow his head in shame before the commonest beggar in the street. His female guards, taking note of this weakness in their master, propped him up, so to say, with pride and love. If he were weak, they would make him strong.

An outer circle of high-born and beautiful women, who had also the duty of comforting and supporting the handsome Archdeacon, consisted of the Countess von Finkenstein (Graf von Finkenstein's sister), Ernestine von Bardeleben, elder sister of Countess Ida, Fräulein Maria Consentius, Fräulein von Larisch, and many more. But the destiny of the Church was not in their hands. The real power of the Ebelians rested with Countess Ida, Fräulein von Derschau, and Fräulein von Schrötter.

These ladies introduced into the circles not only a feminine spirit, and feminine ways of look-

ing at things, but ladylike habits of life. The church was made pleasant and pretty, and the service had a something about it sweet and even gay. All the intercourse of brother and sister was conducted with sentiment and effusion of soul. Bad habits, and most of all masculine bad habits, were put to the ban. For instance, the men were forbidden to take snuff, to smoke pipes, to drink much wine, and to sing profane songs. Wine-stuben and beer-cellars were regarded as places unfit for young men to visit. The sport and riot of student life were frowned down.

Most of the young men submitted their ways to the guidance of these female ministers; though the clergy stood out warmly for their own small vices. Luther is said to have loved his pipe, his glass, and his stave; indeed, the most riotous of burchen ditties, laughing at the man who loves not woman, wine, and a song, as a dull fellow who will live a fool his whole life long, is popularly ascribed to him and called by his name. Now Luther's name is a tower of strength in Prussia; nowhere stronger than in Königsberg, and in the Altstadt church, under the altar of which the dust of his first-born son was laid. Diestel appealed from the three ladies to Luther; but the three ladies would not

bow to Luther in the matter of pipe, and stave, and glass. The Rev. gentleman did not want to smoke; he disliked the perfume of tobacco, and had never lit a pipe in his life; but he was fond of snuff, which was then the fashionable vice. He dabbed it about his coat; he dusted it over his frills and cuffs; the stains of it lay upon his lips; the smell of it was upon his breath. Snuff made him an unpleasant object to see, still more to salute with a holy kiss.

Fräulein von Derschau, the young lady who had charge of him, bade him explain and amend his conduct, which he did with a bluff kind of humour. Diestel said he took a pinch as an act of penance. In his normal state, he was apt to grow proud of himself and of his office in the church; to fancy himself better than the rest of mankind, and to indulge in dreams of his high calling in the Apocalypse. A pinch of snuff made him mortal. When he pressed the box, a sense of his natural weakness came upon him; when he sneezed, his soul felt bowed and humbled to the dust. Fräulein von Derschau scolded him for his filthy ways; he promised to reform; and as he went home down the Lang Gasse bought a fresh supply of his darling herb. Diestel, being a low

fellow, was less disposed to follow good counsel than the young men of higher rank.

The Female Church aspired to be known, not only as the most fashionable and feudal church in Prussia, but as the one in which devotion to the King was taught as a sacred duty, hardly less binding on Christian men, than unquestioning obedience to the will of God. The Female Church was beyond all things a loyal church.

Under the Archdeacon, these three noble ladies formed an inner and a higher circle of the body; though Kanitz, who had now been recognised by Ebel as the First of the Two Witnesses of God, was usually admitted to their meetings. If Sachs' evidence may be taken on the point, these four persons were the only people in Königsberg ever raised by Ebel to the highest order in his sect. Three of these four persons, the three ladies, Ebel purified and sanctified unto the Lord by a mystic rite; after which it was understood that these ladies had power given to them to purify and sanctify others, both women and men. Divine grace was to flow downwards; first upon Ebel; then upon Countess Ida, Fräulein von Derschau, and Fräulein von Schrötter; next upon Diestel, Kanitz, Finkenstein; and afterwards upon all the

circles to the uttermost bound. The three ladies claimed to be of higher rank in the system than any male; even than the clergy, with the one exception of the Archdeacon himself. They were supposed to have a real charge of souls on earth; and a regal place in the kingdom that shall be, world without end. On earth, they were the active ministers of faith and love; the divine passions through which the fallen could alone be cleansed from sin and restored to God.

In this high service of the church they were eager to spend and to be spent. In it they took upon themselves duties from which women of the world would certainly have shrunk. They became inquisitors of private life. They acted as confessors to repentant criminals. They condescended to the arts of spies.

They kept a quick feminine eye on every one likely to go wrong; most of all on such as stood within the higher circles. Kanitz was too pure in life to need much counsel; but the Graf von Finkenstein gave them trouble; and the Rev. Heinrich Diestel, a passionate and wayward fellow, called down from their judgment-seat many a stern rebuke. It was the accepted practice, if not the written law, that among the Ebelians men were to

come under bonds, and women were to reign and rule.

To teach, to scold, to coax, was the women's part in the Female Church. They were supposed to understand the masculine nature perfectly; and every man in these circles who wanted guidance, comfort, and instruction, had to wait upon them. The ladies are said to have been very hard and searching as to secret sins, and to have wrung confessions from the most unwilling penitents. They are said to have been extremely keen in tracing out any suggestions of disloyal love. Professor Sachs declares, that in these inquisitions they sometimes went beyond the bounds of fact; using their nimble fancies to suggest offences; such as might have been committed in thought, if not in act. The men, it has been said, found out, that the more they confessed the more they would be petted and praised.

The Archdeacon and these ladies contrived to make their circle a very pleasant one. Ebel disliked a row. All suavity himself, he made every one gentle and content around him. If there were quarrels he kept well out of them; which was easy enough for him, since all his disciples, both male and female, thought it their duty to spare him pain.

"Kiss and be friends," was his rule of life; hence kissing and hugging are said to have been always going on in his church.

The whole body of the Ebelians was supposed to enjoy a life in the Lord apart from that of the world; one which implied many privileges and graces only to be won by the Saints. They were all brothers and sisters; a sacred family, living in angelic purity and angelic freedom.

One of their soft rewards for leading a life of grace and purity was the privilege of tendering to each other a Seraphic Kiss; each brother having the right to give his sister a chaste salute; a custom which they had derived from their old German foregoers, the Brethren and Sisters of the Free Spirit.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE FREE SPIRIT.

WHEN the Teutonic Knights came into the old Prussia, to convert the Pagan worshippers of Percunas by the short-sword exercise, they were followed from Germany by a crowd of men and women, calling themselves followers of the Free Spirit, and making loud protests against the abominations of Rome.

They seemed to be a secret society, holding a mystic doctrine, obeying rules which they did not care to own. A sealed book, called the Nine Spiritual Rocks, written partly in Old German, partly in Latin, contained their singular creed. So far as we can make them out, by study of their fragments of doctrine, they would appear to have had much in common with the Pauper Paraclete. They assumed that all men are brethren and equals in the Lord; that man may become free in spirit from the bonds of law;

that he can rise by the divine help into a region of grace; and that for one who has attained to this higher liberty of the spirit, it is impossible to commit sin. They seem to have held that all things come from God, and will revert to God. They taught that the creation of mankind and of the earth was not a single act —commenced one day, concluded another, but a continuous proceeding of the divine will; nature in action, law in progress; so that the present and the past are one, and all that now is, will be, and must be in the future. To them the universe was but a phase of deity, which had become visible to His children through the Father's love. Man, according to them, was the actual Son of God, born of Him, and to Him, since the first of days; a thing of like essence with Himself; pure, incorruptible, indestructible, world without end. The mortal child, though parted from its heavenly parent by a wall of flesh, had, not the less, a faculty of turning inward towards the original source of things; having, in the consciousness, a means of uniting itself with that from which it had originally come. A man who had thus returned in spirit to the Father, so as to have lost himself in the Supremest Essence, had, in

their belief, arrived at a perfect state of freedom; so that in his new condition of existence, his passions were no longer snares, but sanctified and heavenly powers.

These German mystics seem to have held that as God can do no wrong, so, His children, when absorbed into His will, can do no wrong. Sin, therefore, was in their eyes a thing of the past times, born of the earth, a portion only of men who might still be struggling with the law. For themselves they had no concern with sin; the Spirit had made them free.

Like the Pauper Paraclete, these brethren appealed to the common people. They dared to defy Cardinals and Popes; they laughed at canons and decrees; they spat upon bulls and briefs; they refused to join in prayer, to attend the sacrifice of mass, to confess their sins and seek absolution from a priest; they repudiated all forms of external worship. The whole universe was their temple, and they taught the multitude that God was nearer to them in a forest glade than under a golden dome. Dressed in a poor garb, they wandered from town to town, begging their bread, preaching to the poor, holding meetings in the night, and railing against the pride and pomp of

the established faith. Each brother was attended by a sister.

These Brethren and Sisters of the Free Spirit had a great success. For nigh two hundred years, Popes, Cardinals, Electors, made war upon them. Agents of the Holy Office seized them. Many were committed to the purging flames; yet the protest which they made against a carnal and licentious church was carried by them into every corner of Germany, and into every province won by the Teutonic knights. The more they were persecuted the more they spread. The very convents of Germany could not be protected from their presence. In Swabia, many of the monks and nuns left their religious houses for the world; after having been taught by these Brethren that it was better to live without rule, since the true way of worship was to wait on God in the freedom of the Spirit.

What may be called the domestic life of these old German monks and nuns is of yet higher interest than their theological views, from its close resemblance to facts which have begun to show themselves in the religious societies of our own generation. These Brethren and Sisters of the Free Spirit invented the seraphic kiss; the kiss of love,

of innocence and peace. They did not marry. They professed to live, one with another, male and female, friar and sister, not under law, but under grace. Born anew, absorbed into the Deity, what to them was wedlock. Only an exploded rite, a thing of the flesh, a sign of the unregenerate heart. As men and women who had passed into the seraphic state, all things were lawful to them and all things were common to them. What could the Pope and his lawyers do? They had entered on a new being. A seraphic kiss conveys no taint. Their yearning towards each other brought no shame. In the overflowing fulness of their joy, the sting of human passions found no place; for they lived on earth as the angels live in heaven,—in love and innocence all their days.

It is curious to see how the Church in Germany dealt with these seraphic monks and nuns. The Archbishops of Cologne and Maintz denounced them from the altar, sent out friars to preach against them, and called great synods to condemn them. As the Brethren waged a war to the death against Popes and prelates, minsters and cathedrals, rubrics and canons, all weapons which could be turned against them may have

seemed to these dignitaries fair. The most effective, perhaps, of these weapons was one which an Italian prelate never would have dreamed of using,—the marriage vow. Knowing how strongly ran the popular tide in Germany against enforced celibacy, the Council of Cologne, though it was composed of men who had themselves taken vows of chastity, denounced the Brethren and Sisters of the Free Spirit as enemies of matrimony! These doctors quoted from Holy Writ the passages in which the woman is given to the man, and the twain are blessed in their union, and commanded to go forth into the earth and replenish it with life. This line of argument had a great effect. An old German burgher loved before all things, after God and His Son, his house, his wife, his fair-haired lads and lasses; and neither priest nor friar could persuade him that a bright hearth, made holy by the presence of a good woman and her happy children, was not the sight of all sights on earth the most acceptable to God. Thus, when he was told that these followers of the Free Spirit were the enemies of marriage, he began to doubt those very virtues which had made them look so good in his eyes. It was not that he objected to a Brother being accom-

panied by a Sister. Every Adam had a right to his Eve. If the Brother had boldly married his Sister in the nearest church, the German burgher would have thought the transaction perfect. But he could not comprehend that doctrine of living above the law; and he did not like to hear that there was a better way than that in which he lived with his own wedded Frau. He had a sly suspicion that seraphic kisses might lead the unwary into something worse. Unions of the soul in a state of grace were things which he should not desire for his own Lotte and Gretchen; and that which he should not like for his own daughters he could not sanction in the wandering nuns.

Through feelings such as these of the old German burghers, the great doctors of the Church made war against the Brethren,—not seeing, perhaps not caring to see, that the line of attack lay through their own entrenched camps. Anyhow, they sent their proclamation forth to do its work. Perhaps it helped to weaken the Brethren; it certainly helped to destroy the Church.

The most singular thing in the story of these seraphic monks and nuns is the fact, that their pretended purity of life appears to have been proved. The Inquisitors, into whose hands the

Archbishops of Maintz and Cologne surrendered their victims, sought for the very worst truth against them, by the very worst means. Torn on the rack, screwed in the thumb, broken in the joints, scorched in the fire, the crushed and bleeding Brethren confessed their sins and crimes, —the evil they had spoken of the Pope, the scorn they had expressed for public worship, the denunciations they had hurled against the law; but they had no confession to make of sins against purity of life. The fact of their having kept company—males and females, brethren and sisters—was not disputed, either on the wheel or at the stake. Men and women had lived together in the Lord. They were free in manners, and a particular brother might be attached to a particular sister. They had lodged in the same barn, slept under the same tree. They had been in each other's society day and night; yet the most searching quest into their ways of life by the spiritual police, who followed them with a deadly zeal and hate, could bring to light no circumstance implying moral blame. With what appears to have been deep regret and wonder, the Inquisitors report, that though these heretics had cast themselves away from God, had given themselves up to evil

imaginings, and were utterly lost to the sense of shame, they had contrived to preserve their bodies chaste.

The facts were certainly perverse; but servants of the Holy Office had a ready means of explaining such perverse phenomena by the power of devils. The use of demons had long been known to the church police. When a saint of high repute had been caught in some intrigue, and it was feared that his detection might cloud the Church with odium, some imp of darkness had been brought upon the scene, to bear the stripes and carry off the shame. Imps, you see, have power to assume a human shape. Imps, from their malignant nature, must feel a keen delight in blasting the reputation of holy men. Thus, you are brought to see that when some holy priest appears to have been caught in his penitent's house, and to have suffered stripes and blows from her irate husband, it is safe to conclude that the devil has been at his tricks, and that the offender is not really the man he seems. No; that fellow who got his bones broken, his flesh thumped black and blue, was not a holy prior, but one of Satan's imps who had put on that pious garb! So it happened, when the Inquisitors found they

could prove no personal immoralities against these Brethren and Sisters of the Free Spirit,—who seemed to have actually entered, as they said, into a seraphic union, free from passion and desire, —that they were able to explain this purity of life as being the very worst sign of all. Nieder, a Dominican writer, had told the world that Satan has the gift of rendering those whom he would favour blind to beauty and cold to love. The world believed him. All through the Dark Ages, when hardly anything of a spiritual kind was either believed or understood, this frigid power of Satan was an article in every creed. The devil was cold of blood, and an icy heart was one of the gifts which he could make to his chosen sons. He had made this gift of coldness, said the Inquisitors, to these angelic monks and nuns, who lived to each other, above the law, in purity and peace; so that the innocency of their lives became one of the vilest accusations urged against them at the stake.

Hundreds of them perished in the flames, for no higher crime than that of having offered to each other a seraphic kiss.

CHAPTER XV.

THE EBELIANS.

PARTLY in the old way trodden by these Brethren and Sisters of the Free Spirit, partly in the way walked by the Pauper Paraclete and his followers, partly in a way of his own, adapted, as he said, to the feet of counts and countesses, the Very Reverend Archdeacon Ebel founded, in the Altstadt, a new Christian society—a church within the church, a state within the state.

He took upon himself the burthen of no name. Outside people called his party the Ebelians; but the word, if flattering to his pride, was full of peril to his peace, and he forbore to use it. He professed to be Lutheran and orthodox; but while calling himself Lutheran and orthodox, he taught from his pulpit, and in his chamber, that the old law was about to pass away, that the end of all things was at hand, that Christ was about to appear among His saints. In the face of such a

coming, what was the world, with its petty names and nice distinctions, to them? What were the highest things of a day—powers, dignities, possessions—but mire of the pool, dust of the road, earth of the earth, things to be shaken from men's feet? What could it profit a man if he had gained the whole world and lost his soul?

How was a sinner to meet his Judge? How was the penitent to prepare for God? How, except by putting himself in the hands of God? And how could he place himself in the hands of God except by submitting his will to the counsels of His Church? By this chain of argument the Archdeacon led his people into a pure theocracy—a government by priests, conducted in the name of God.

In the new system Ebel was the chief-minister and mediator to all his flock. The three great ladies were his agents and confessors. Diestel, the fiery pastor in the Haberberg Church, was his adjutant; von Auerswald, the Ober-Präsident, may be styled his friend; the Graf von Kanitz, the Graf von Finkenstein, the Graf von Münchow, were his henchmen. Judges on the bench, officers of the garrison, were among his habitual hearers. In this hierarchy of the Prussian

saints you ascended by a hundred stages of rank and virtue, from the humble sacristan up to the pious Archdeacon—the man highest in authority on earth, because he stood in intimate relationship with heaven.

That duality in the soul of nature which Schönherr had conceived, and Ebel adopted, led by an easy gradient into a state of manners, as between brother and sister, which would hardly have been thought safe in the outer world. Nature is dual. Nature is male and female. Light is man; water is woman. In nature these two elements fuse and change. From these vague premises Diestel is said to have drawn a conclusion—which Ebel shrank from admitting, and which no ordinary man could have found in them—that the regenerate man and woman, by virtue of his and her regeneration, have had opened out to them a wider field and a higher range of love. God, he urged, is love; and man, when he is perfect, is also love. Smiles and greetings are the alphabet of love. To whom, if not to the elect, are given the finest pulses of the heart? To whom, if not to the pure in faith, are offered the choicest gifts? And what gift is sweeter to man than the magnetic glow which passes from brain to brain,

through a tender dropping of soft tones, a gentle pressure of warm hands, a personal contact of chaste lips? Diestel went much farther in these speculations than Ebel; and in the select society of his church in the Haberberg, he practised and permitted freedoms which were never dreamt of in the higher circles of the Altstadt; but in all these Pietist societies the fraternal kiss was given and taken as a sacred sign. It was understood among them that the bond of brotherhood in the Lord was higher and stronger than any legal tie. To the pure all things are pure. But the brothers and sisters were enjoined to accept their privilege of grace with a holy purpose, and use them only to a noble end. If any taint of carnal love should mingle in their joy, the act of spiritual dalliance was said to be changed into a deadly sin. They were only free so long as they lived in the true liberty of the spirit.

Yet, in spite of the Archdeacon's great success in the high places of fashion, he made few, if any converts to his church, where he most desired to win them,—among the students and professors in the class-room. Unlike the Pauper-Paraclete, Ebel felt no enmity to learned men. On the contrary, he was anxious to gain their favour, and to recon-

cile the professors of philosophy with the preachers of religion. But the men of science stood aloof from him and all his doings. Two or three professors, of high standing as scholars, who had been drawn to the side of Schönherr when he seemed to be founding a new school of piety among working men, remained for a little while in connection with Ebel and the circles of the Altstadt Church. One of these men was Professor Bujack, a naturalist, from whom, it was afterwards alleged, the Pauper Paraclete got the only shreds of science which he ever knew. Another was Hermann Olshausen (brother of the still more famous Justus Olshausen), who filled the chair of divinity. He had been drawn to the side of Schönherr, whose pupil he had become, and whose life he wrote. But neither the man of science nor the divine could be drawn into any cordial union with the Archdeacon and his aristocratic church. Hermann Olshausen, like his brother Justus, the renowned Oriental scholar, leaned towards the liberals, both in his politics and in his religion. A Pauper-teacher seemed to him a man for the times in which his lot was cast, and the people among whom he dwelt; and the religious revival ought, in his view, to have been carried forward in the

streets and in the workshops, among the mechanics and traders,—not, as Ebel and Diestel were now conducting it, in the high social circles of the Church and the Schloss. When the fashionable preacher parted from the humble prophet, Hermann Olshausen, though he did not quarrel with Ebel, then and there, took part with Schönherr, provoking a feud between the pulpit and the professor's chair, which afterwards grew into a loud and bitter war.

One convert of importance only from the scientific classes joined the Archdeacon's church. This convert was Sachs, a young man then unknown to fame, but fated to rise a few years later into lurid and calamitous renown. He was the most fatal convert whom the Archdeacon made.

Ludwig Wilhelm Sachs, a young Jew, sharp of tongue and quick of brain, a man with little heart, and with less conscience, had come from Gross Glogau to Königsberg in search of a medical chair. Of his great ability in his line of life, no doubt was felt even then, while he was yet young; but he was born to the wretched lot of a Jew; a race which lay beneath an ancient curse and a modern ban. No Jew could then be appointed to a professor's chair, and a professor's chair was the object on which Sachs had set his

soul. A man with no sense of religion, with hardly a gleam of moral softness,—a being all brain and nerve, cold in nature, quick in perception, acrid, humorous and splenetic,—he looked about the world, and took his measure of the men with whom he might have to deal. In the medical society of Königsberg, where his tongue was feared and his talent prized, he had risen as high as a Jew could hope to rise,—into the rank of physician. If he wished to rise yet higher, he must deny his fathers and forswear his faith. In his later days, Professor Sachs was known as Mephistophiles,—a name which he earned right well by his daring spirit, his cynical phrase, and his contempt for religion. He made a mockery of sacred things. In the lecture-room, he would pause in a discourse on anatomy to pour out his venom upon some passage in Holy Writ. In the name of science he would protest, with a biting acid, against the sacred mysteries of our faith. In his secret heart he regarded preachers as the common enemies of our race, to whom no quarter need be shown by a man of wit. As a medical officer, he pretended that he had cause to know that students of theology were the most abandoned of all the student tribe. One lad, with a ruined

constitution, went to him for advice. "You are a student of theology?" said Sachs, with his usual sneer. "No, Herr Professor," replied the lad; "I am a student of law." "Then I would advise you to change your profession. You would make an excellent divine."

In judging of this man's course of life, it is only fair to remember the sacrifices which a bad law compelled him to make, before his genius as a teacher of anatomy could find its field.

In Prussia, the Ministry of Public Education has charge alike of all affairs in the churches and all affairs in the colleges; and thus it chanced that the very same power in Berlin which had made Ebel an archdeacon could make Sachs a professor. How could he get at Baron von Altenstein, who was then minister in Berlin? Through von Auerswald, Ober-Präsident in Königsberg. But Sachs had no acquaintance with the Schloss. That was a trifle. Had he not heard it said that Countess Ida ruled her father? Was it not whispered, even in Gross Glogau, that the Archdeacon was all in all with Countess Ida? If, then, Sachs could win the Archdeacon, would he not be likely to find himself at one end of a chain, the other end of which lay in the minister von Altenstein's office

in Berlin, where the things which make men's fortunes were said and done? Of course, he knew the faculty would have to recommend him in the first instance, and he could fairly reckon on so much justice being done; but as a man of the world, he knew that scientific merit is not always enough to win the crown. A good word from the Ober-Präsident would make his merit highly conspicuous to a busy minister in Berlin. The young Jew made out, as it were, a bill of costs. How much was he worth? Above all, how much was he worth to Ebel? He was known to be a Jew. That was a main point in his reckoning. An obscure convert is worth something; a known convert is worth a good deal. Was he worth a place? Could he sell Moses and the prophets for a professor's chair?

Having a cynical spirit, and also a wife and child, he went to Archdeacon Ebel; listened with profound attention to his story of the light and water; learned that the day of judgment was near at hand; and then offered himself, along with Madame Sachs and his infant son, for instant baptism. The rite was soon performed; Mephistophiles became a member of the Altstadt Church; and then, by way of recompense for his advance

in virtue, Sachs became, through the good offices of Countess Ida, Professor of Medicine in the University.

Sachs was a very nice young man—to look at; Ebel had not yet learned to know what he was like when touched. Looking on that face, soft as a girl's, the Archdeacon, who had recently been toying with the mystery of sex in nature, fancied that he saw in it a reflex of the water rather than the light. This fancy pleased the preacher; since he had begun to dream that sex may not be a fixed and final fact, but only a stage of growth. Sachs is said to have struck the Archdeacon as being a female-male; a man in whom the dual principles of his creed were found combined. Ebel made much of him, and he made much of Ebel.

CHAPTER XVI.

COUNTESS IDA.

THE relation of Ida, Countess von der Gröben, to Archdeacon Ebel, is the greatest puzzle in what may be called a series of moral puzzles. This woman is described on all hands as one whose character was nobler than her noble birth. To say that she was wise, affectionate, and good, is to use terms so cold that her friends would hardly recognise their fitness. Men who hated her and all her house assigned her such graces and virtues as have rarely met in one mortal creature. Her father loved her, as he loved no one else. The family of her dead hero, for whom she kept her widowhood, idolised her. All the best families in Ost Preussen, where the life is Puritan, courted her, and waited on her. In Königsberg her name is still mentioned as that of a lady who was the light and glory of the place. That bitter pen which spared neither foe nor friend,

and which flung its vitriolic ink into every face, held back from any abuse of Ida von der Gröben.

Yet the relations of this widowed Countess to the handsome Archdeacon were, to say no more, of an exceedingly equivocal kind; as such things are construed by people who have not the privilege of saints. They spent much of their time together. They professed to be bound to each other by some special tie. They certainly were not married. Ebel, if not Ida, used to speak of their friendship as a union of two souls. On some occasions and to very near disciples, the Archdeacon is known to have described the Countess as his Spiritual wife; yet nothing contrary to good manners can be supposed to have marked their intercourse, since they lived as priest and penitent, openly towards each other, and before all the world; passing much of their time at the Schloss, under the Ober-Präsident's roof. Whatever freedom passed between them was supposed to be sanctified by their religious vows.

Ida seems to have considered herself, in some mystical way, as a candidate for that high function in the new kingdom, from which her friend, the Fräulein von Derschau had lately been deposed. If the millennium was near at hand, the persons of

the Apocalypse must be now alive. If, as the Archdeacon taught, the first battles of the new era were to be fought in 1836, the armies must be even then mustering for the strife. If the angels and the witnesses were getting ready, why not the bride?

Minna von Derschau was a clever and lovely girl, as the Countess Ida began to feel and see. As the two best friends of Ebel, they were thrown much together, and Ida learned to appreciate the girl's high talents as well as to dread her aspiring spirit. She was a lady to be feared by any woman, who might have conceived a wish to keep the Archdeacon to herself. She had known Ebel longer, if not better, than her friend; having sought him in his early days, and made herself very pleasant to him, while, as yet, he had no great ladies in his train. She professed to have gained from his teaching a new life of the spirit. She was a bold and eager girl, whom no ordinary fears would daunt. Two or three years ago, she had been a pupil of the Archbishop Borowski, who was her father's friend; but she had left that venerable prelate, to his deep regret, at the call of this handsome preacher in the Altstadt Church. Who could say where she would stop? Once

before, under Ebel's hints of duty, she had been willing to throw herself into the arms of a man so unalluring to a lady as the Pauper Paraclete. She had come to look upon the Church as of higher glory than the world. In her secret heart she was suspected of keeping up the remembrance of her old dream of being the Apocalyptic bride. How could Ida know that this quick and lovely girl would not transfer the affections she had been willing to lodge in Schönherr to his popular and handsome pupil, the delight of every female eye?

The Countess, it is understood, advised her friend to marry; since, as a married lady, she might be able to do many things for Ebel and the Church which could not be expected from her as a single girl. Minna said, in answer, that she could not think of such things: in truth, she had not yet parted wholly from her dream.

One day, Fräulein von Derschau came to speak with Ida about a great discovery. It was a dread secret. No one knew it but herself; and she had come upon it in a flash of celestial light:—Ebel was the Son of Man!

For a long time, the Fräulein said she had been exercised in soul about the Archdeacon. She felt that he was more than human; his face, his voice,

his bearing, his gentleness, his sanctity, his knowledge, being altogether unlike the qualities to be found in mortal men. At first, she had thought he was the true Paraclete, and that Schönherr had been only a pretender to that office. This conjecture had been put away by Ebel himself; who clung to his old master, and would not hear his truthfulness assailed. What then? If he were not the Paraclete, was he not the Son? In a flash of divine light, she saw it all. He was the Son, the first-born Son; the holy One.

This grand discovery was kept a secret. Ida felt that it was true. After a little while it was made known by them to Kanitz, in his quality of First Witness. He also felt that it was true. After much consideration they agreed to hold this secret as an inner doctrine, until the year of grace should come, and every thing could be published from the house-top. Above all, they would not speak of it with Ebel. Of course so dread a secret could not fail to show itself in their bearing towards their master. How could they help becoming fainter in his presence, more anxious for his love, more obedient to his will? They could not deny themselves the profit of extolling his lofty faith, his divine sagacity, his

untiring tenderness. From that day forth, while they hid among themselves the instinct of his Godhood, they spoke of him everywhere as the typical perfect man.

But this grand discovery by the Fräulein von Derschau affected all the relations of these men and women of the inner circle towards each other as well as towards the outer world. Who should be nearest? who should be greatest? who should be the mystic bride?

Between the Countess and the Fräulein, the scales appeared to be so evenly weighted that an accident might cause either one scale or the other to go up. Both were young, noble, beautiful. If one were a richer, the other was an older friend. Ida had been the Archdeacon's worldly stay. Her friends had made his fortune, and her house had been his home. On the other side, Fräulein von Derschau had been his first disciple; when others doubted she had believed; she had been the first lady to adopt his theory of sanctification; in fact, she had never paused in her course, and now she had crowned her works of faith by this grand discovery that her master was the Son of Man.

The Countess wished that her friend Minna would marry. Marry whom? She was well aware

that nothing would induce this devoted girl to quit the Ebelian circle. Who was there within that circle who could offer her his name, with any chance of his offer being accepted? One man, perhaps, and only one. The Graf von Kanitz was her equal in birth, in talent, and in grace. He was a hero as well as a saint; a man wearing upon his breast that cross which he also bore, symbolically, in his heart. More than all, Kanitz was the man who stood next to Ebel in the Church; he was an Apocalyptic man; having a part to play in the heavens as well as on the earth. Surely these things would suffice to win a woman's love. Kanitz was warmly loved by the Archdeacon, not only for his fine figure and his high rank, but for his quiet heroism, his gentle manners, and his yielding spirit. As, since quitting Schönherr, he had been invested with the character of the First Witness in the Apocalypse, it was through this avenue to his heart that he was now sounded by Ebel as to his willingness to marry, in fulfilment of the heavenly plan. Nothing is said in the Book of Revelation as to the two witnesses being either male or female; the case is open; and Ebel told the Count that Fräulein von Derschau was not only his Spiritual mate; the true partner of his soul;

born to him in the heaven above as well as in the earth below; but that they twain were those Two Witnesses seen by St. John, who were to prophesy together for a thousand two hundred and threescore days. On hearing these wonders, Kanitz went to his mate, and proposed to her joyfully; and the Fräulein von Derschau, on the great mystery of the Apocalypse being explained to her, entered upon this union with a thankful heart.

Minna's place among the Ebelians was now fixed for ever; in time she was the Countess von Kanitz; in eternity she was the Second Witness, who had power to shut up the heavens and turn the water into blood. She could never more aspire to become the Bride.

It would seem that Countess Ida, after seeing Minna married to Kanitz, set her mind on seeing the Archdeacon also married. A good and simple woman from the outer circle, she thought, would suit him best; a woman who would not be a rival of her own; who would not the less serve as a point of union; and who might throw the Archdeacon's house a little more open to his high-born female friends. Such a woman was found: young, pretty, docile; and Ebel took her as a wife.

One other lady shared in Countess Ida's intimacy with the Archdeacon, the Fräulein Emilie von Schrötter; one of his earliest followers; a well-born and lovely woman, who, like herself, had listened to his mystic words, and undergone the rite of sanctification. These three women—widow, wife, and virgin—are said to have formed one spiritual household, and to have recognised, each in the other, a good woman, filling her proper place in the world and in the church. They are described as having felt towards each other a peculiar love and tenderness. They considered themselves as three sisters in the Lord, who had been united, through the Archdeacon, in a holy bond.

Ebel is said to have described his relation to these three young ladies in the following way:—The Countess Ida was his first wife, as representing to him the principle of Light (Licht-natur): Emilie von Schrötter was his second wife, as representing to him the principle of Darkness (Finsterniss-natur): Frau Ebel was his third wife, as representing to him the principle of Union (Umfassung). In this triple marriage of the Archdeacon, the simple Frau was to act as the legal point of contact. In her, and through her, Countess Ida and Fräulein Emilie professed to have entered on their mystic union

with her husband. Ida, as the wife who represented Light, had every reason to regard herself as playing the high part of Apocalyptic Bride.

Frau Ebel, a young woman of no high rank and spirit, appears to have been kept by her noble sisters very much in the kitchen and the still-room; places in which she seems to have felt herself more at home than in the confessional and the chapter-house. In the great trials which ensued, her name was never whispered. No one spoke of her wrongs, and she certainly never complained to the world. In the deanery she was regarded as a kind of magnetic wire laid down between the Archdeacon and his high-born spiritual wives. Countess Ida and Fräulein Emilie ruled the church, with the help of Gräfin von Kanitz; but in the august assembly of female saints the voice of this humble Frau was never heard. Nothing in her conduct ever caused the Countess Ida to become jealous of the Archdeacon's lawful wife.

CHAPTER XVII.

SANCTIFICATION.

BESIDES the great discovery made by Minna von Derschau, now the Countess von Kanitz, the new aristocratic circle in the Altstadt is said to have had two grand secrets in its keeping. The first of these two secrets was, the true order of precedence in God's Church; the second was, the true method of purification from sin. True order and true sanctification were held by Ebel and his female confessors to be necessary in a perfect Christian life.

Even in what was seen by outsiders, Ebel appeared to have established a very long scale of orders. How many degrees there were is not known; but I am told that the steps through which a novice had to pass in his ascent from simple membership to the highest circle, were numbered by the score. Ebel stood at the top. Next to him came the three ladies, who stood

above all males. Among men, the highest appears to have been the Rev. Heinrich Diestel; for in a pure theocracy the clergy must always take the lead. Then came the young Graf von Kanitz, a layman of enthusiastic temper, who aspired to hold the office of St. John: after these, stood the great nobles, those Münchows and Finkensteins who made his church the fashion; followed by the nobles next in degree of rank, such as Ernst von Heyking and Edward von Hahnenfeld; then the learned men, like Professors Sachs and Olshausen; and so on, downwards, through judges, soldiers, counsellors, and the ladies of these fine people, to the poor sacristan who swept the floor for a monthly dole. This list was long and sternly kept. Order is not only heaven's first law, but earth's best law. Every man in this system kept his place.

The gradation of dogma was apparently like the gradation of rank. Every stage of belief had its own secret. Only in the highest circle of all, composed of Countess Ida, Fräulein von Schrötter, and the Count and Countess von Kanitz, was it known that Ebel was the Son of God. The next circle only knew him as a perfect man. One circle probably understood the principle of sanctification; another had to be contented with the

mystery of light and water; some of the members were instructed in the methods by which the devil may be overcome; others were told that the Church of God is a paradise of enjoyment for the body and the soul, since the elect are the only heirs of God. The lower circles would seem to have been taught no more than the living principles of the Christian faith. In each stage of the Church, however, the members were led to believe that they knew everything necessary to salvation. The fact that a higher truth existed than the one made known, was always strenuously denied, until the moment came for the saint to take a new step in his faith, when he gratefully accepted the additional light. Such, at least, is the story told by Sachs.

Every member of the Church was brought to respect himself as a great being, a spirit, an angel, a witness. He was told to be of good cheer; to think much of himself; to expect great happiness; to be a joy to himself and to all other persons near him, for the sake of his high fortunes; the present earth being his, as well as the glory which is to come.

This organisation of his circle was Ebel's strength. No pope ever managed his creatures

with a firmer will. So far as his congregation went, the Archdeacon bowed his head to none; not to the Ober-Präsident in Königsberg; not even to the Minister in Berlin. Who were they, that a servant of the Lord should fear them? Never, perhaps, had the theocratic principle been carried to a higher point than in this Prussian society, and in this Lutheran church.

This sway of the clergy in Ost Preussen was enlarged and riveted by the policy which Ebel adopted in regard to confession. In the Lutheran Church, the rule as to confession is of doubtful force, and even of doubtful meaning; for, while the Augsburg Articles declare that private confession ought to be kept up, it also admits that general confession is not necessary to the salvation of souls. This rule has been accepted by the German churches in a widely different spirit. In one place confession has been set aside, as an agency of moral evil; in a second place it has been tolerated as a thing indifferent; in a third place it has been encouraged and enforced. Each pastor has held himself free to adopt the line most suited to the days in which he lived, and the opinions current among his flock. Generally, the practice of confession may be said to have waxed and waned as

the religious barometer rose and fell; coming into favour with revival of the devotional spirit; falling into contempt with the return of a worldly spirit.

Ebel, as the preacher of a day of wrath, was bound to foster and protect confession. High-Church people would not have blamed him for it. But he is said to have carried this practice to a point unknown in the Prussian kingdom and the Lutheran books. He insisted that the revelations made by his penitent should be open and full, general and particular, public and private. Nothing must be hidden from him, and from the three great ladies who heard confessions in his name. Nothing must be glozed to him and to these female searchers. Every member of his Church was taught to value the blessings of good advice; and Ebel, as the mediator with God, was to be treated as the referee of every woman and every man. Who could help them in their trials if he could not? Was he not their friend, their comforter?

The chief men in his circle were bound to present themselves from time to time before the Countess von der Gröben and the Countess von Kanitz, by whom they were to be searched and purified. Professor Sachs has given some account

of the method of proceeding adopted by these ladies towards their penitents; a mixture of coaxing, wheedling, and dictating, hardly to be read without a laugh. It is droll to find how these ladies overcame the subtle intellect and resisting selfishness of Mephistophiles Sachs. They brought the Professor to his knees, and tore the innermost secrets from his heart. When they spoke in Ebel's name, they spoke with a voice of power which every one hastened to obey. As they put the case, was not the very reverend Archdeacon a husband to every woman, a father to every man? Full confession must be adopted as a rule of daily life; for, if Ebel was to judge every one, it was necessary that nothing, however trifling, should be kept from his eyes. Women were enjoined to speak out; to conceal nothing; least of all, their secret affairs and their private thoughts. All must be told; so that the Archdeacon, in judging the church, might fall into no error and commit no wrong.

"Ebel," said to me an eminent Professor, speaking of these details, "was a thorough priest; almost a Jesuit."

"He had great talents?" I said, by way of inquiry.

"Yes; a very great talent for bamboozling women."

By means of this true order of precedence in the church, through the agency of these ladies, the Archdeacon was very soon master of all the mysteries in Ost Preussen.

The second of these great secrets held by the circle was the true method of sanctification. This sanctification was indispensable. The world was about to end; and sinners had to be prepared for the event. How was a man to be made worthy to stand before his Judge? Only, said the Archdeacon, by one great spiritual act. He must be cleansed from sin; he must be freed from bondage to Satan; he must be purged from lust of the heart and pride of the eye. He who would save his soul alive, must be raised above temptation; must be taught to trample on the flesh; must be nerved to resist the diabolical power of beauty. In the presence of a living woman, he must be trained to feel as though he were standing by a wall of stone. His eye must be rendered cold, his pulse must be kept calm. No face, however lovely, should be able to stir the summer in his veins. With unmoved heart, he should be able to press the most fascinating sister's hand, to print

a kiss on the most beautiful sister's lips. While he had not the power to do such things easily, a man, said Ebel, was certainly not in a state of grace.

The method by which men and women were sanctified is still, in some respects, a secret. Kähler pretended to make it known in his theological romance called Philagathos, and Sachs described it in evidence. But Kähler was not a member of the circle, and Sachs' odious declarations have been strenuously denied by Countess Ida and the Graf von Kanitz. Generally, the method of sanctification used by Ebel is thought to have consisted in a series of lessons in Gospel freedom; which were meant to fortify the mind of his followers against the allurements of carnal beauty. Thus, it is told, that a youthful member was trained by precept and example, to use his freedom without abusing it. In the private meetings of the sect, which are said to have taken place in either the Countess Ida's apartments in the Schloss, or in Gräfin von Kanitz' house in the Upper Town, some beautiful woman was persuaded to bare her arm, her foot, her shoulder; so as to present, in the eyes of all the circle, a living type of the temptations thrown by Satan in the ways of men.

The minds of the devotees were supposed to be tempered and hardened in this Spiritual fire. How far these lessons in the art of resisting beauty went, we do not absolutely know; when the day of scandal came, it was said they had gone very far indeed, before the process of sanctification had been found complete. The cynical pen of Sachs delighted in suggesting the most horrible details.

In the matter of this gospel freedom, as in every other; the true order of precedence was observed. Ebel and Diestel, having a larger share of grace, had also a larger liberty in fact than the laymen. I have not heard that either Graf von Kanitz or Graf von Finkenstein was allowed to indulge in Spiritual polygamy. Each had his right to a spirit-bride, and each had the privilege of giving and taking the seraphic kiss. But Ebel and Diestel are supposed to have gone much farther, though the flagrant immoralities which were afterwards brought against them by Sachs may not have been proved.

Sachs was a zealous convert, and he rose in the Church. Among other ways in which he promised to be useful was that of calling in more Jews to the fold. Bible in hand, he used to go

about the street, entering into the houses of his old friends, whom he had now discarded for gain. One eminent and aged lady told me she remembers him coming to her house with the German Bible in his hand, which he opened and began to read. She caught him tripping in a phrase, and gave him the proper words. Mephistophiles could not restrain a smile. "My dear Professor," said the girl, "you had better close that book for the present: we carry our Bible in our hearts, not in our hands."

Two calamities, which came near together, gave a sudden shock to the prosperity of this revival church. One misfortune fell within the circle; the other, and more fatal, fell without. One was the failure of a prophecy, in which the Archdeacon had indulged; the other was the death of Ober-Präsident von Auerswald, and the nomination of a philosophical liberal to his throne in the Schloss.

CHAPTER XVIII.

DARKER DAYS.

SEEN from a worldly point of view, the chief mistake of Archdeacon Ebel's life appears to have been his error in fixing upon the actual times when prophecy ought to be fulfilled.

Jung Stilling, an author whom he loved to read and quote, had promised that the year 1836 would be a time of wonders; the opening stage of the millennium, in which the first great battles of the kingdom would be fought. Ebel had from an early day adopted this reading of his mystic countryman; but the year being yet afar off, his adoption of Stilling's prophecy caused no actual ferment in the Church.

But this dabbling in sacred numbers was not enough for the Archdeacon. Much pondering on the Book of Daniel led him to expect a great awakening in the Church in 1823, the year in which the Holy Alliance sent a French army to

burn and ravage Spain. Expecting the appearance of our Lord in person (Ebel never lent himself to Minna's delusion), he ventured to declare that He would come in the Easter week, at the moment corresponding to that of His ascent from the Mount of Olives. A whisper went through the circles. Meetings were called, prayers offered up, and believers enjoined to prepare for that coming day. Christ, it was said, would appear among His saints in a glorified shape, clothed in celestial light, as He shone upon the three Apostles from the hill of the Transfiguration.

Who would be able to endure that sight and live? How were they to meet the Lord? Where should they await His coming? Some thought it should be in church, others that it should be at home. Most of the brethren felt that they should be together, since the Lord would expect to find His Church on earth. Nor was it well, they urged, to mope and whine. Their God was a God of love and light. Joy went with Him, and gladness was about His path. Some one suggested that the true welcome should be given at a marriage-feast, a scene like that in which the first miracle had been wrought. What had been the opening scene of his first ministry, should be the opening scene of his

second. All voices fell into this idea, and preparations for a marriage-festival were set on foot. A young man was found who, under such august temptations, was ready to take a wife. The circles were now searched for a young woman willing to unite herself with this young man. Such a girl was found. Nothing remained but to kill the fatted calf, to decorate the church with garlands, and to spread the tables with meat and wine.

Countess Ida Fräulein Emilie, Countess Minna, with all the ladies of the circle, entered upon this scheme for meeting the Lord with ardour; not so some of the more prudent and worldly men; who felt that they were staking their credit on a calculation of dates which might prove to have been false; in which case they would find themselves covered with ridicule almost amounting to public shame. From such a test of faith they would have gladly shrunk. One of the highest of these prudent councillors, the Graf von Finkenstein, ventured to put in a word of caution. The ladies stormed upon him. Ebel smiled at his lack of faith, and Diestel reproved him for his worldly spirit. Finkenstein got restive under these rebukes; and, when his own sister raised up her voice against him, he quitted the

circle in no gentle mood. Professor Sachs, though he shared in the Graf von Finkenstein's want of faith, was not such a fool as to speak his mind. In truth, he had lately made a mistake, which is rather amusing in so keen a gamester. He had put himself wholly into Ebel's power.

Having lately lost his first wife, the young Silesian Jewess, it was feared that Sachs would fall into bad ways, and become a scandal to the church. The ladies had called him to account for his past delinquencies; and the Countess von Kanitz had been desired by her sisters to hear his confession, to fix his penance, and, when he had repented, to receive him into grace. She had been very sharp with him; insisting that he should make a clean breast of his sins; concealing nothing, not even the guilt incurred in thought. Sachs had told her much, and she had insisted on hearing all. She had probed his heart. She had dictated forms of expression; and when she had drawn from the sinner a full acknowledgment of his guilt, she had insisted on his going home, writing it all down, and bringing it to her in person, before she would give him the reconciling kiss. That written paper had given evidence against Sachs, in his own hand, of extraordinary turpitude,

and that paper of confession had been lodged by the Countess von Kanitz in Diestel's hands.

Under these adverse circumstances, Mephistophiles could do nothing but sneer and sigh: and humbly accept the post which was given to him by Ida in the marriage-feast.

Easter came; bridegroom and bride appeared; the feast was spread; the psalm was duly sung; but the expected Guest did not arrive.

When the marriage-festival broke up in wrath and doubt, and Graf von Finkenstein appeared to have been justified by facts, the inner circle of believers laid the blame of their disappointment on the Count's unbelief. When they heard that all the worldlings in the city and provinces were laughing over their feast, they grew more and more angry with the Count for having caused it to fail. How could the Lord be expected to appear in the presence of one so hard of heart? All the ladies were enraged against their faithless brother; and when he spoke in his own defence, which he was apt to do warmly, they went so far as to menace him with a public expulsion from their church. As such a course would not have suited either his frame of mind or his position in society, Finkenstein bent his head to the passing gale: but

from that time forward he was regarded as a man who had moved outwards from the centre of grace and light. His want of faith was the cause of a growing coldness between himself and a sister whom he dearly loved.

This quarrel within the circle was envenomed by a circumstance which happened without. A clergyman of some repute in the city, the Very Rev. Ludwig August Kähler, took advantage of the public scandal, to put the Archdeacon and his followers into that dull theological romance which he called Philagathos: the Kingdom of the Good made Known.

No names were given in this work; for it would have been a dangerous thing in that old Preussen, openly to assail a party which had the Schloss on its side, and was supported by so many counts and barons, as that of the Ebelians. Yet Kähler's satirical picture of the kingdom of the saints was applied by every one to Ebel and his friends; for in one part of his story a young lady is taken by a female friend to a meeting of pretended saints, who adopt her into their circle, and then begin kissing her all round; to which rite of initiation she submits until she observes a young fellow approach her who is known to her

by reputation as the greatest profligate of her city; when she starts to her feet in horror, runs home, frightened and sick at heart, throws herself on her knees, and confesses to her outraged parents all that she has seen and suffered. The suggestion of oddity was very broad; but Ebel could not reply without seeming to take up the accusation; and Kähler enjoyed the satisfaction of seeing his adversaries wince under a charge which they could neither bear nor rebut.

A far wider and more lasting injury fell upon the Ebelians from the death of Auerswald,—an event which happened in the following year; and the nomination to his high post of a man whose temper and genius placed him on the opposite side in politics to their own.

Heinrich Theodor von Schön, the man succeeding to Auerswald as Ober-Präsident of Ost and West Preussen in 1824, was one of the great chiefs of modern democracy; the pupil and friend of Immanuel Kant; the son-in-law of Auerswald, whose eldest daughter was his wife; the right hand, and (whatever his detractors may have said to the contrary) the best head of the great minister Baron von Stein, the prime regenerator of Northern Germany. Of an old and noble family in

Ost Preussen, connected with the Auerswalds and the Brünnecks, he was not the less a thorough liberal, a patron of learning, a hater of priests. A man of large head, with piercing eyes, a shrewd tongue, and a benevolent heart, the new Ober-Präsident was both feared and loved in his province, and very few persons had either the power or the will to set themselves up against what he had a mind to do.

At first, the change in Ebel's affairs was not much felt. Schön was not a man to meddle with the Church, so long as clergy and congregation kept the peace and avoided public scandal in their rites. The Archdeacon stood at the head of a powerful chapter, as well as in front of a fashionable sect. Such a minister of the gospel might do much to disturb even an Ober-Präsident's reign; and a magistrate, young in office, whatever his abstract views may be, is seldom inclined to bring a nest of clerical hornets about his ears. Countess Ida, too, was still, as it were, in power. Von Schön was her brother-in-law; the husband of her eldest sister; so that the fascinating widow was nearly as much at home in the Schloss as she had been during her father's time. Thus, nothing unjust or harsh was likely to be done by Schön; and, in

fact, the Ebelians enjoyed under his impartial rule many years of prosperity and peace.

But from the day of Auerswald's death, the circles felt that a change had come upon them, in relation to their contests with the University and with the world. They were no longer privileged to fight, as it were, under the royal flag. They had nothing more to get from the Schloss. If Schön would do them no wrong, he certainly would not strive, like Auerswald, to do them good. No more chairs in the University would be won by courting them. No one could expect to be repaid for his kindness to them by invitations to dinners and balls. Future Kählers would have no reason to conceal their names. Those who mocked them, would do so to their faces. Those who hated them, would show their hatred in the street. In a word, they would have to plan their own battles, and take their chances in an open fight.

In this great duel between the laymen and divines, between the University and the Church, it was known that the new Ober-Präsident would stand and fall with the first. In his quick and sceptical nature there was not a spark of mysticism. He was in eminent degree a critic, a logician; who looked to science, not to religion, for the great im-

provements which he longed to bring about. Schön was very free with his money; he spent three fortunes; but he is supposed never to have given a groschen in his life to any object connected with the Church. This state of things in the government office was equal to an absolute change of front.

One effect of this change was quickly seen. That Sachs whom Countess Ida had made a Professor, by way of reward for his docility in swallowing the dogma of light and water, very soon left the Altstadt circles; going over to the University, and carrying his talents and his secrets to the service of what he saw was going to be in future the stronger side.

The Rev. Hermann Olshausen, Professor of divinity, was perhaps the most brilliant and formidable of the many foes who now began to write and preach against the Ebelians. Diestel entered the field against Olshausen: since it was judged by the council of ladies to be alien to the rank and office of their chief to notice such attacks. Diestel was a very passionate and unscrupulous man, and Olshausen had no reason to rejoice in the victories which he won. In 1833 two clergymen went mad in Königsberg, under circumstances which excited

public curiosity in a high degree. Some persons said that these two persons had lost their senses through religious terror; and as they had been known to attend the Haberberg Church, where Diestel preached, Olshausen charged their insanity upon the violence of spirits caused by the revival. Diestel, finding himself assailed by this eminent writer, answered by a savage personal attack.

In his younger days, Diestel had been a student in the faculty of law; and, having a natural genius for invective, he had stored up all the terms of abuse which might have been useful to him in a criminal court. His blows were rude and stiff; and the more delicately nurtured divines denounced him as a coarse fellow, unworthy of their pens. It is very doubtful whether he was a man more formidable to his enemies than to his friends.

CHAPTER XIX.

LAW COURTS.

EBEL, following in the wake of Bengel and Stilling, had once more fixed upon the year 1836 as the time at which the first battles of the millennium would begin. The devil, however, seemed ill-disposed to wait until his enemies expected him. He opened his campaign a year before the prophetical time.

Graf von Finkenstein had now become a stranger to the Church, and to the sister whom he loved. The Church had cast him out into darkness; and his sister had been drawn into closer union with the saints, until the unexpected and undesired death of Gräfin von Kanitz (Minna von Derschau) left the post of Second Witness open; when Ebel advanced her to that high dignity, and the First Witness, as a consequence of her promotion, offered her his hand. The two witnesses being joined in marriage, the Gräfin von

Finkenstein became, not only Madame von Kanitz, but the third female power in the Church; equal in council, if not equal in rank, to the Archdeacon's Spiritual wives.

One day the Graf von Finkenstein heard that his sister, and her female friends, were trying to draw into their circle a young lady of his family, the Fräulein Zelina von Mirbach; a rich and lovely girl, who was expected to make a brilliant figure in the world. Thinking it became him, as head of the family, to warn his lovely kinswoman against what he had now come to regard as a seductive and immoral circle, he wrote a letter to Fräulein Zelina, filled with abuse of Ebel and Diestel; in which he hinted at the existence among those saints of practices which no honest man and modest woman could endure; which hints he said he could prove to be only too well warranted by original documents then in his possession. Quite innocently, Zelina carried this note to her friend and kinswoman the Countess von Kánitz, who read it with the utmost scorn and fury, calling it a string of abominable lies. Getting the upper council together, she placed her brother's letter in their hands; and when these ladies had perused it, they agreed that,

although they ought not to trouble the divine repose of their beloved Archdeacon with such unworthy broils, it should be properly answered. They sent it over to the Haberberg to be dealt with as Diestel should see good.

Graf von Finkenstein soon saw reason to regret his haste in sending that warning note to his young kinswoman.

Fräulein von Mirbach instantly joined the Pietist circle. The Countess, his sister, quarrelled with him finally and fiercely; not only putting him away from her love as a lost and abandoned wretch, but claiming restitution of dowry, which she declared that he had fraudulently detained.

Kanitz denounced him in the religious newspapers by name, as a man of immoral life and conversation; hinting that the Countess von Finkenstein, his wife, was nearly as low in such things as himself.

Worst of all, he found himself suddenly attacked by that rough master of calumny the Rev. Heinrich Diestel, the Seal-breaker of the Apocalypse. Diestel's missive filled thirteen sheets of large paper, and it was crammed with such insults as none but Diestel could have hurled against a foe.

Finkenstein, who thought he could convince his brother Count, sent a reply to Kanitz, to the same religious journal in which he had found himself suddenly assailed; but not being able to see how he could deal with his clerical opponent, either in the simple way of fact or in his own way of sturdy invective, he laid the missive of thirteen sheets before the criminal court as a calumnious libel. On reading Diestel's letter, the judges fined the reverend gentleman two hundred thalers for his offence; and then inquired, as they were bound, into the causes which had led to this angry correspondence. Diestel had been charged with immorality by the Count, in a letter which was designed to prevent a young lady, of noble family, from joining the Archdeacon Ebel's circle in the Altstadt Church. That letter referred to original papers in the Count's possession, which would prove the truth of this charge. What were these documents? Charges of such a kind should not be lightly made; most of all against ministers of the gospel who had the cure of souls. Finkenstein was requested to produce these papers, and submit them for inspection to the court.

The Graf appeared before the bench with a

mass of papers, written by himself and by his wife. He was a violent, puzzle-headed fellow, who had very odd notions about documents and proofs. The accusations which he made against Ebel, Diestel, Kanitz, Countess Ida, and the late Fräulein von Derschau, were numerous, many of them improbable, and most of them unsustained by any show of proof. One of his suggestions was that Ebel, under cloak of a pious rite, had made proposals of an unseemly kind to his lady, the Countess von Finkenstein; but this hint was conveyed in very obscure language, was not followed up, and was generally disbelieved. The court could make nothing of his charges of immorality; but, as he declared that the Ebelians held a number of secret doctrines quite unknown to the Lutheran Church, they thought the matter should be laid before the Consistorium; a court in Königsberg having charge of ecclesiastical affairs.

In this court, the enemies of Ebel were very strong. Von Schön, the liberal and free-thinking Ober-Präsident, was its chairman (ex-officio); high on its benches sat the hostile critic of the Ebelians, the Very Rev. Ludwig Kähler. From such a tribunal Ebel knew that he had now no favour to expect.

When Finkenstein's papers were laid before the Consistorium, that body deputed two of its members—the Councillor Kähler and the Assessor Zander—to examine the Count, and some other persons named by him, as to the matters alleged against Ebel and Diestel in his letter to Fräulein von Mirbach. Kähler's report (as might have been expected from the author of Philagathos) was so black that the Court felt bound to suspend the two clergymen from their pastoral office, and to send an account of the matter to Baron von Altenstein, Minister of Ecclesiastical Affairs in Berlin, for his opinion. In the course of these inquiries, which were carried on in secret, Kähler and Zander got alarmed on finding how great was the number, how high the station of men and women whom they had good grounds for considering as members of the suspected circles. They seemed to be collecting rumours against half the noble families of Ost Preussen ; and they desired, if anything was to be done, that the odium of conducting such a case should rest upon higher reputations than their own.

Even the Count and Countess von Finkenstein felt the need of protecting their good name against the power of these high-born ladies, who could

whisper away a reputation between a smile and a sigh. When they found their honour put in question, they sent about among their friends, who had known them from childhood, to get up a general statement of their high character, with a request that those friends would sign it. Great numbers of noble and respectable people did so, publishing their belief that the Graf and Gräfin von Finkenstein were persons of unblemished honour; and Finkenstein had to be satisfied with the protection thus afforded to his name. Yet nothing could prevent such a general warranty of high character from working two ways. On one side people said, and justly, that a noble gentleman and a noble lady, who had done nothing of doubtful propriety, would never have stooped to defend themselves by papers which were only proper to an artisan and a serving-maid. On the other side, it was very fairly alleged that, if these noble persons, after being members of the Archdeacon's church for many years, could still be described by those who knew them as persons of the highest credit and reputation, it was impossible to conclude that the mere fact of belonging to that circle was evidence of a man being without honesty, and a woman without shame.

Finkenstein's wrath against his sister and her husband, who had called him a rake, and tried to prove him a swindler, drew him into the commission of a thousand follies. But the begging of that general testimonial of his purity was certainly the silliest act of his life.

After some delay in Berlin, the Minister Altenstein sent the papers back to Schön; with certain queries which he desired to have laid by the Ober-Präsident before the local and clerical court; mainly put with a view to ascertain how far that tribunal regarded the matters alleged in these charges against two eminent and popular preachers as fit subjects for a lay investigation. Schön laid these queries before the court, which, under Kähler's advice, appears to have reported that these charges against Ebel and Diestel involved two points, both of which might be very properly investigated by the king's judges; that was to say: (1) a charge of such extraordinary moral corruption, as, if proved, would bring the two men within the action of a criminal court; and (2) a charge of seeking to establish a new religious sect, an offence which was punishable by the Prussian code. On receiving this opinion from the Consistorium, Altenstein confirmed the

previous suspension from office, and the Ober-Präsident, von Schön, instructed the Criminal-Senat to bring an action against Ebel and Diestel in the Criminal Court.

CHAPTER XX.

FINAL TRIALS.

Ebel and his enemies—the High Church and its adversaries—the feudal party and the liberals—were now before the courts of law, with charge and counter-charge, with accusation and defamation; the whole business being conducted in the spirit of a duel to the death.

In such a strife the odds were fearfully against the party which saw the whole army of placemen led by the government, drawn up in line of battle on the opponent's side. That, in the final struggle, was the Archdeacon's case.

Eleven years of office had made some difference in von Schön. They had not rendered him unjust or even inclined him to be unjust towards the high church; but they had helped to identify his reign as Ober-Präsident of Preussen, more and more closely with the progress of secular learning and the growth of liberal institu-

tions. The idea of a new Germany had come into his mind; of a Germany that should be enlarged, united, free. This idol of his imagination was to be a child of reason, and its birthplace was to be the University. It shaped itself to his eye as a thing of the future rather than of the past. Feudal traditions were to have scarcely any place in it; superstition was to have no place in it; learning was to be its only gospel; professors were to be its only priests.

On this figure of an ideal Germany, Schön had pondered until he thought it was actually coming into life. Everything that stood in its way, he laboured to remove; and among these obstacles he had come to recognise the high-church circle in the Altstadt, over which his beautiful sister-in-law, the Countess Ida, was supposed to exercise her sovereign sway. With this beautiful woman he had lately been at feud, about a family matter in which the Ebelians had been much concerned. A gentleman, of good family in Ost Preussen, Herr von Bardeleben, who had courted, married, and then divorced Ernestine, one of Ida's sisters, came to the Schloss with offers of his love to his divorced wife's niece, the Fräulein von Schön. Von Bardeleben was a man in office, and his suit found favour

in the young lady's eyes; and on Schön giving them his blessing, the happy lovers were made man and wife. Ernestine, the divorced lady, was a member of Ebel's circle, and the great people of that church arrayed themselves on her side in her quarrel with the families of von Bardeleben and von Schön. It was in these dark days of family feud, that Schön launched against his sister-in-law's friends the opprobrious name of Mucker.

When the charge of immorality was brought against Ebel and Diestel, the matter was first referred to one of the judges, who took upon himself the office of an Inquirent; who has to look up the facts, confront the witnesses, and give the matter in dispute a preliminary hearing. The fiery Seal-breaker behaved so insolently before this judge, as to give his prosecutors a great advantage over him. He raged and stormed, and even grossly insulted the judge, because he could not see things with clerical eyes; and at the very opening stage of the trial he was committed to five months of imprisonment in a fortress for contempt. It is not unlikely that his enemies fancied they had now got rid of him.

Among other witnesses to fact, the Inquirent summoned Countess Ida to appear. She proudly

refused his summons, denying his power to ask her any questions which involved an inquisition of her conscience. The Inquirent caused her to be told that she was bound to answer his citation, under penalty of fine and imprisonment. She took no notice; on which he fined her two hundred thalers. On hearing of this fine being laid, she sent him word that he might send her to prison also, but should never force her to appear in a case which would offend her conscience. The Inquirent, puzzled how to act, sent the Countess's letter to his experienced elder, the President, who sent it back with a marginal note that they would consult their own ease by leaving her alone, since no threat they could make would bend so proud a spirit. What could the Inquirent do to sustain the dignity of his court? He could not send the Ober-Präsident's sister-in-law to a fortress, as he had sent the Haberberg pastor; and yet he did not like to be beaten by a woman on a point where he was clearly in the right. He consulted his friends, who could not help him. By a third person he caused the Countess to be told that the fine of two hundred thalers might be increased. "Let him fine, and fine," she answered: "I will never

come into his court." Every man in Königsberg knew of what was going on, and for the sake of public justice, it would not do to let the mob suppose that the bench had been defied. The Inquirent laid the facts before his great chief in Berlin; on which the Minister of Justice advised him to keep quiet, to leave the Countess alone, and to give the matter such a turn as would leave the impression that her evidence was not desired.

Acting on this sound advice, the Court cancelled the fine, and sent the two hundred thalers back to the Countess Ida.

Sachs now offered his services as a witness who knew, and would tell, the truth against these accused clergymen; out of which offer, on the part of this Professor, there came a scene which is perhaps unequalled in the comedy of actual life.

On Sachs offering himself as a witness, the defendants made a formal protest. The eminent Professor of Medicine, they said, was a man whose word could not be properly received in a court of justice. Of course the Inquirent asked for details. Professor Sachs was a person of great intelligence, well known in the city, and holding a

high place in the University. How would it be possible to refuse his evidence except on very strong proof being given that he was really unworthy to be heard?

"I am a religious man," the Archdeacon answered, in effect; "and I cannot accuse a fellow-sinner. What I know of Professor Sachs has come to my ears through the channel of confession; confession not made to me, but to others; what he has stated against himself is known to many; but it would not become my calling, as a minister of the gospel, to say more. I know the witness; and for the sake of others, I protest against such a man being heard."

Now, Professor Sachs' evidence was to the prosecution all and all. Sachs was the chief accuser. Without him, little could have been alleged, and still less proved; nothing that could have brought the Archdeacon within the cognizance of a criminal court. More might have been done against Diestel; who had never been so careful in his words and conduct as his chief; but a verdict punishing the Seal-breaker, and allowing the Archdeacon and his people to return in triumph to their old places in the Altstadt church, would not have suited the liberal party, and would, therefore, have com-

pelled Schön and the Professors to begin their work afresh. On all sides it was felt that this duel was a duel to the death.

Schön, as being, ex officio, chairman of the court, would hardly need to hint that Sachs' evidence could not be refused on the ground of Ebel's bad opinion of the Professor. Opinions go for nothing in a court of justice, which can only stop to consider attested facts. It was agreed that Sachs should be heard.

The counsel for the defence now received from Diestel two written documents, which he laid before the judge. They were in Professor Sachs' hand-writing, and bore his signature. They were addressed to the late Countess von Kanitz (Minna von Derschau), and contained a very long and detailed statement of his many and grievous offences against God and man, some of which were absolutely incredible and revolting. A man who had been guilty of such acts, said the defendants, was utterly unworthy to be heard in a court of law, in a matter affecting the honour of noble women and of gallant and pious men. The court communicated with Professor Sachs. What had he to say? Were not these papers forged?

Mephistophiles had to rub his eyes and to bow his head. This man of science, so keen of intellect, so shrewd of tongue, who mocked at religion, and held women in contempt, had to come forward in a court of justice with the plea that, in a moment of moral and physical weakness, he had been made the victim of a young lady—bold, inquisitorial, and of morbid fancy. While he was connected with the Ebelians, he had been placed under the spiritual guidance of the Countess von Kanitz; a lady of subtle brain and overpowering will, who, in a moment of mortal weakness, had drawn from him the statements now before the court.

Were they true?

They were not true, said Sachs, in answer to the judge.

But they are given in writing, in the first person, and are signed?

Yes; that was so; and yet the statements were not to be taken as his own. When he wrote them he was beside himself with grief. He did not know what he said and wrote. The lady pressed him to cleanse his bosom of its secrets; she hinted at the disclosures she would like to hear him make; he had a strong desire to win her favour; and he

had therefore made those confessions of imaginary crimes.

Not only by word of mouth, in the heat of a personal interview, but coldly, in his own chamber, under his hand and seal?

Yes, even so; the lady was imperious; she would not take his oral statement; she sent him home, to think the matter over, and to write it down; he wrote what she wanted him to write.

Poor Mephistophiles!

What could the judge do under such circumstances? Without Sachs' evidence he had scarcely any ground to stand on; and Sachs was now proved by his own confession to be worse than the defence had called him—not only spy, informer, and apostate, but a rogue, whose written word was branded by himself as a deliberate lie. The judge was much perplexed; and the defence maintained, with a good deal of scorn, that he ought to dismiss the charge as having wholly failed. That would probably have been the course pursued by a judge sitting in open court; but the Inquirent was in those days the real Public Prosecutor; and he did not like to see such a cause slip through his fingers. When it became known that, in spite of protest, he had resolved to admit Sachs as a

witness, subject to rejoinders from the other side, shouts of remonstrance rose from the Mucker nobles against what they held to be unfair leaning of the bench, and undue influence from the Schloss.

Sachs was heard. To rebut his evidence, the defendants put in a crowd of witnesses. First came Major Graf von Münchow, who testified that he had been closely connected in friendship with the Archdeacon for eighteen years; ever since he had returned from serving in the war of Liberation against the French; and in that long period of acquaintance he had learned to appreciate in him a man of holy life, whose teaching had renewed and purified his moral nature. Next came Edward von Hahnenfeld, who deposed that he had been a pupil of Ebel, and a friend of Graf von Kanitz for many years: and had always found the Archdeacon a man of high principle and blameless conduct. After him, came Baron Ernst von Heyking, a soldier scarred with patriotic wounds, who said that he loved Ebel and hated wickedness; that when he was a young fellow in the camp, he thought valour in the field the noblest distinction of a man; but since he had been a follower of the Archdeacon, he had come to see that it was better to be good than even brave.

Professor Friedlander, of the University of Dorpat, followed Heyking, with testimony of the same kind, but given from the religious point of view. A dozen persons, of scarcely less distinction, gave their evidence to the same effect.

The President of the Court was only too glad to find the defendants apply for leave to remove their cause from the local court to the Kammer Gericht in Berlin.

CHAPTER XXI.

SENTENCE AND REVERSAL.

THE year 1836 was certainly a year of trouble for the Ebelians; and the battles of the millennium, long predicted by the Archdeacon, seemed to have commenced. Ebel preached in the Moravian chapel, and kept the inner circles of his church together.

Shut out from the Altstadt church, of which, as dean, he had been the preacher for so many years, Archdeacon Ebel looked about him for a fold in which he could gather his homeless flock. Now, close to his church, in the Altstadt Long Street, there stands an ancient and solid chapel; built, perhaps, by some prior of the Teutonic Knights, towards which the eye of a stranger is drawn by an inscription, printed on the front, in the pious old German fashion:—

Bethaus von Brüder-gemeine.

It was the Moravian Chapel, in which a people of simple virtue and exalted piety worshipped God. Between these good folks and Ebel's aristocratic congregation, there had always been much kindness. The Brethren loved and respected Ebel; and it is certainly a strong point in favour of the Archdeacon, that these harmless people should have clung to him first and last. When his church was closed against him, they lent him their chapel for his services. It was a humble place, but the offer of it went to his heart. In the upper room of this prayer-house; a plain oaken room, with a few forms, a reading-desk, half-a-dozen poor paintings, and a wooden gallery for the females; Ebel, and his train of counts and countesses, met every Sunday, until their trials closed.

The old oaken walls still whisper, as it were, of the presence of that high company in their hour of affliction. Here, in this dingy corner, sat the Countess Ida, with her sister wives made one with herself in the spirit. Near them sat the Gräfin von Kanitz, weeping inwardly at the apostasy of her brother, and the wrongs which his wickedness had heaped upon her Lord. There stood a band of high and heroic men; soldiers of the Cross, and soldiers of the war of Liberation;

Kanitz, Münchow, Heyking; a perfect gallery of noble and Quixotic figures.

Brother Ennequist, a holy man, who led me about the chapel, and whose sweet face reminded me of a Shaker friend, spoke of the Archdeacon and his people with profound respect.

Whatever Professor Sachs may have said of Ebel, Brother Ennequist evidently regards him as a man of God.

In 1837, they got their cause removed from the local court to the Kammer Gericht in the capital. They obtained the services of Crelinger, one of the ablest advocates at the Prussian bar. Crelinger was a brother-in-law of Madame Crelinger, the German Siddons, and a friend of Fanny Lewald, who got from him many of those curious details about the Mucker which she has woven into her memoirs.

Their suit was not prosperous in Berlin. The old King was too much of a practical soldier and politician to care about revival and conservative movements in the Church. After a trial of two years' duration, the Criminal Court decreed (March 1839) that the Very Reverend Wilhelm Ebel, and the Reverend Heinrich Diestel, should be degraded from their sacred office; that they should lose their

civil rights; that they should be held incapable of serving their King in any capacity; and lastly, that Ebel should be confined in a public institution until he came into a better mind.

Five months elapsed before this stern sentence was made known. Why was it kept back so long? Men who were not Ebelians whispered aloud that the verdict had been altered after it had left the judges.

How could it be carried out? Ebel was to be imprisoned; but no place of confinement was named in the decree, and no one was appointed to see the sentence carried out. The prisoner was to be kept in custody until he was instructed and reformed; who was to undertake this task of instructing these instructors, of reforming these reformers? When Schön received from Berlin a copy of the verdict, he sent for the officer who had charge of the public prisons, and asked him how such a sentence could be carried out. That officer read the paper with a doubtful shrug:—

"Your Excellency will have to undertake this duty in person; since there is no man in Königsberg but yourself who could presume to give lessons to the Archdeacon."

Loudest in their clamours against the iniquity of this decision were Countess Ida and Graf von

Kanitz. Ida clung to her Spiritual husband all the closer for the tempests which were howling round his head. She had schooled herself to regard the Archdeacon as her all in all—her husband, her beloved, her Saviour, her God. She found her liberty in serving him, her life in being near him. The dearest wish of her heart was to give her body and her soul for him, that he might be spared one pang of pain. Sachs, who counted her devotion to Ebel a kind of feminine madness, said of her: "If the Archdeacon had told her to kill a man, she would have done it; if he had bidden her love and marry a stranger, she would have wept and done it." She paid him, in her own person, a divine respect; and she never quitted his side until the other day, when she laid him in the tomb.

While Schön was wondering how he could carry out the singular sentence of the Criminal Court, a sudden change occurred in Berlin. Friedrich Wilhelm III. was gathered to his sires, and his more religious and less despotic son succeeded to the throne. A change of men took place. Altenstein, dying, left the ministry of Public Instruction to Eichhorn, who was, like the new king, a Pietist, and perhaps a Mucker.

Under the new reign the friends of Ebel appealed from what they called the injustice of Schön to the justice of Friedrich Wilhelm IV. Then began that trial in the Supreme Court in Berlin, which served to carry through private channels of information the knowledge of Ebel's High-Church theories into every corner of Germany. The verdict ultimately pronounced by the royal court, though it left Ebel without a pulpit, cleared his honour from the last stains which had been cast upon it; so far, at least, as a verdict which was received with some suspicion could have any such effect on the public mind.

If the first trial had not ended in the old king's reign, it would probably have had another result. The higher Court undid everything in the finding of the lower Court which could prudently be undone. It removed the sentence of civil death, on the ground that the two clergymen had *not* been guilty of intentional breach of duty. It removed the sentence of imprisonment on the ground that they had *not* been guilty of founding a sect. So far, therefore, as criminal matter was concerned, the verdict of the Court was in their favour.

It ran against them only so far as it confirmed

the suspension from clerical functions pronounced by the Königsberg Ecclesiastical Court.

In fact, the high matters in dispute between von Schön and Ebel were referred by this Court of Appeal to the still higher courts of Public Opinion and Universal History.

King Friedrich Wilhelm IV. is known to have lived a Pietist, and is said to have died a Mucker. If this tale be true, he was not the only royal convert drawn into the Mucker Church. Pauline, queen of Würtemburg, is said to have become a disciple of the Königsberg seer.

From the date of his appeal, the Archdeacon lived in retirement with the Countess Ida, his most immediate Spiritual wife. They travelled from place to place, from Ost Preussen to Silesia, from Saxony to Würtemburg. Ida wrote a book in defence of her master, called Die Liebe zur Wahrheit, The Love of Truth, which was published in Stuttgart in the year 1850. They took up their residence in the lovely town of Ludwigsburg, near Stuttgart; and there, in 1861, the Archdeacon died; but not until he had seen the fruit of his labours and afflictions, in the growth of a Mucker society in many of the most enlightened and industrial towns of Germany—in Halle and

Heidelberg, in Berlin and Hanover, in Dresden and Stuttgart, in Barmen and Elberfeld. He is said to have enjoyed a serene old age, and to have passed away as though he was simply going to sleep.

Long before he passed away, the Mucker branch of our English Church had risen, fought its strange fight, and retired from public life into a Somersetshire clover-field.

Let us follow now these English visionaries into their lovely retreat.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE ABODE OF LOVE.

"No stranger is admitted into the Agapemone," says Murray's Handbook.

"The Abode of Love," said Lord Chelmsford, then Sir Frederick Thesiger, speaking as counsel against our English Mucker, "is a family consisting of four apostate clergymen, an engineer, a medical man, an attorney, and two blood-hounds."

"The Agapemone," says Boyd Dawkins, the latest lay writer who has paid attention to this subject, "is surrounded on every side by a wall from twelve to fifteen feet high."

Such is the fair sum of what is commonly known about that Abode of Love, which feebly represents in our colleges and churches the results of those large movements of revival passion which have made so much ado in German society and the German courts, and have built for themselves, in the United States, such homes as Mount Lebanon,

Salt Lake City, and Oneida Creek. Is it too much to say that these scraps of information, even if they were true, would leave a reader very much at fault?

They are not even true.

Strangers who can show just cause for going into the Abode of Love, are not sent away from its gates. Bloodhounds are not kept in either house or garden. Once, indeed, such dogs were used for defence against cunning and carnal men (much as the dogs of Carmel are lodged and fed by the Syrian monks), but only for a short time, just after an act of violence had occurred, for which the law could give them no redress. Some years ago those bloodhounds were sent away. No wall from twelve to fifteen feet high surrounds the estate on every side. No such fence of stone was ever built. In fact, the Abode of Love lies open to the eyes of men as much as either Over Stowy, Halswell Park, or any other domain in the county of Somerset. The only bit of high wall near the place is that which stands in front of the church, built to prevent the Spaxton clowns from staring through the west window from an adjoining field.

The Saints who have been gathered into peace at Spaxton have audacities and heresies enough to

plead, without lying open to the charges made in these idle tales.

When, for the purpose of studies which are now in the reader's hands, I wrote to ask Brother Prince whether he was willing to receive me in the Abode of Love as a visitor, he caused me to be informed, by the pen of Brother Thomas, that my visit would be welcome, that he should be glad to see me in person, and that he and his people would give me such information as I might wish to gain. The welcome, if not warm, was polite and frank. Brother Thomas hinted that the Abode was a private house, not a public institution. In reply, I had to let him see that my visit, if made at all, must be made on public grounds. On these free terms, I went down from London to the Abode of Love.

As you roll from the quaint old streets of Bridgwater, by the eaves of houses which must have been aged and poetic in the days when Blake was a little boy, into the green country lanes, you seem to be passing in a few moments from the age of Victoria into the age of Alfred. The road is bad, the mire is deep, and the descents are sharp. A strong stone farm peeps out here and there from the midst of oaks and firs. The lanes are sunk

below hedges of thorns and briars, so that an unfriendly force would find it no easy task to push their way from town to town. The streets just left behind seem to have been huddled for safety into a heap. No length of suburb melts the street into garden, the garden into cornfield. Two or three houses, thinking not little of their fine fronts and open grounds, make a rash attempt to pass for a suburb; but the simplest eye could at once detect the imposture. No; at the very gate of Bridgwater (a five-barred gate, with a crusty female guard,) you plunge at a cost of sixpence into the Heptarchy. Saxon Somerset was, I fancy, green and bright, with corn-sheaves on these slopes; stone homesteads, snug with thatch, upon those knolls; with village towers and spires among the trees; and with a slow but sturdy population, like these Spaxton and Charlinch hinds, in all her deens and combes. Yon low dark line of Quantock hills, sombre with clumps of pine, and bright with breadths of pasture, cradled the sleepy and secluded hollow from the world.

Pull up the horses on the brow of this hill. The scene is beautiful with all the beauty of our western land. In front springs a dome of cornfield, crowned with the picturesque nave and tower

of Charlinch church. At the base of this hillock flows the soft wooded valley towards Over Stowy, a place renowned in the poetry of Wordsworth and Coleridge. In the distance, near enough for every glade and park to stand out freshly, run the Quantock hills. A spire, a hall, a castle, marks the site of some story famous in our early annals. But what, in this valley at our feet, in the winding lane on our left, is that fanciful and striking group of buildings; a church to which the spire has not yet been built; a garden, cooled by shrubs and trees; a greenhouse thronged with plants; an ample sward of grass, cut through by winding walks; a row of picturesque cottages in the road, a second row in the garden; high gates by the church; a tangle of buildings in the front and rear; farms, granaries, stables, all of them crimson with creeping autumnal plants? That group of buildings is the Agapemone; the home of our male and female saints.

In a few seconds we alight in front of the Abode of Love.

The large gates were closed, but the side door stood ajar. The man who drove me seemed to be surprised at finding this door ajar; he, too, had been told that no one is admitted into the Abode

of Love. Once in his life he had got into the stables, being taken inside by a groom who was proud of his horses, as he might very well be, since they had come from the royal stud. My driver told me with a shudder, he had heard it said in the village ale-house, that the strange people in the Abode of Love played billiards on a Sunday in the church. For himself, he would not mind a game of nine-pins on a Sunday afternoon; but he saw a great difference between poor fellows playing nine-pins in the ale-house yard and gentlefolks hitting ivory balls in a church.

As I entered by the open door, a gentleman in black, whom I knew must be the Rev. George Robinson Thomas, once a student of St. David's College, next a deacon in the church, afterwards a curate at Charlinch, subsequently a witness for Brother Prince, now First of the Two Anointed Ones of these latter days,—came out from the house to see me and shake hands. His form was fine, and his manner good—a tall figure, spare and well made, crowned by an intellectual head, with a clean face, and a pair of sharp blue eyes; a man who knew how to dress and to bear himself, in whom every line of a face no longer youthful, told you that your host had been a scholar and a

preacher:—such was the gentleman, otherwise known to me from report as the husband of Agnes Nottidge, the hero of an ale-house comedy, and the worsted party in a scandalous suit. Had I met this gentleman in St. James's Square, without hearing his name, it would have been very hard to connect such a face and figure with a tale of fraud. Yet this dignified cleric, known to the lay world only as the husband of Agnes Nottidge, is accepted by the chosen few residing in the Abode of Love as First of the Two Anointed Ones, to whom has been given power to explain to men the mystery of the Seven Stars, to keep the Seven Golden Candlesticks, and to declare the Man whose name is the Branch.

Thomas led me into the chief room, which I saw at once was a church. Three ladies were seated near a piano, at which one of them was playing when we came in. My name was mentioned to them, by way of short introduction; they simply curtsied and left the room, their own names not having been pronounced in turn. One of these three ladies, as I afterwards found by a lucky guess, had once been Julia Starky, daughter of the Rev. Dr. Starky (a clergyman of standing in society and of high repute in the English

Church), and was now the second wife of Brother Prince; but she was not made known to me, either then or afterwards, by her married name.

After the usual remarks had been made about the fine morning and the pleasant drive, Thomas asked me if I would go at once to Brother Prince's room. I said I should first like to ask him four or five questions. He bowed, and bent himself to answer; but he seemed to be ill at ease while we remained alone; and our talk was now and then broken by the entrance of some sister, who slipped into the room, listened for a moment, and then went her way. I began to see that it is not the habit of this place to allow any brother, any sister, even one of age and rank, to hold private conversation with a guest. Each Saint appears to keep watch and ward upon his fellow. Prince may dwell apart, and hold himself accountable to none. But the rest of his people lie under bonds, and only act and speak in each other's presence. They move in pairs, and trines, and septetts. Thus, they have the Two Anointed Ones who declare the Man whose name is the Branch; they have the Seven Angels who sound the Seven Trumpets; with the like pluralities in person and in office. I was very soon struck by the fact, that in this community of

Saints, I was never to be left alone with either man or woman, or, indeed, with any number of persons of a single sex; a thing beyond my experience in the homes of either German or American Saints. Go where I would, these persons went about with me as guides and spies. The Two Anointed Ones acted as my hosts, but I never found myself alone with them for five minutes. If we lounged into the lovely greenhouse, took a turn in the garden, idled about the stables and offices, either Sister Ellen, Sister Annie, or some other lady, would slip in quietly to our side, and take her share in any talk that might be going on. At first I thought this coming and staying of the sisters might be the result of female curiosity; since Sister Ellen told me, on one occasion, that she had not spoken to a stranger, excepting only a few words to a man who was mending a pane of glass in her room, for nine years! But my first impression, I think, was wrong. The watch was not casual; the motive was not curiosity. On quitting the Abode of Love, I told the Rev. Samuel Starky (second of the Anointed Ones) that I was going up the hill to Charlinch, of which place he had once been Rector, to see the church and glebe; on which he said he would go with me,

if I would walk. This was what I wished; on his old glebe, outside the Agapemone, I thought we might have some freer talk about his early days than I could hope to enjoy under Prince's roof. But on hearing that such were my wishes, Thomas said he would also go; and when we were ready to start, Sister Annie came out in her high boots and with her skirts tucked up, prepared to defy the dirty lanes. In short, some sister kept me in sight and hearing until I drove away from the Abode of Love.

To cut short my four or five questions, Thomas left the room. In a minute he returned to offer me food—a cup of coffee, a biscuit, a glass of wine. Being fresh from my early meal and cigar, I was declining his offer with thanks, when something in his way of pressing his little courtesy upon me struck me as like the manner of an Arab sheikh, who offers you bread and salt, not simply as food but as a sign of peace. "Let it be a glass of wine." A woman brought in a tray with biscuits and two decanters; one full of a good dry sherry, the other of a sweet new port; which she laid down on a table, and bidding me help myself, went out. For half an hour I was left alone with these two bottles in the church.

Yes; in the church; lounging on a red sofa, near a bright fire, in the coloured light of high lancet windows, filled with rich stained glass; soft cushions beneath my feet; a billiard-table on my right hand; church furniture in oak and brass about me; and above my head the sacred symbol of the Lamb and Dove, flanked and supported by a rack of billiard-cues.

This room, I knew, was that in which the Great Manifestation had taken place; that mystic rite through which living flesh is said to have been reconciled to God. Lovely to the eye, calming to the heart, this chamber was, and is. The stained glass windows shut it in completely from the world, allowing nothing less ethereal than the light of day to penetrate these walls. A rich red Persian carpet covered the floor, in contrast with the dark brown oaken roof. Red curtains draped the windows, the glass in which was painted with a mystical device; a lamb, a lion, and a dove—the lion standing on a bed of roses, with a banner on which these words are inscribed,

OH, HAIL, HOLY LOVE!

The chimney-piece was a fine oak frame of Gothic work, let in with mirrors. A harp stood in one

corner of the room; a large euterpean in another. A few books lay on the tables, not much used,—Young's Night Thoughts, a Turner Gallery, Wordsworth's Greece, and two or three more. Low bookcases ran round the walls, filled with religious volumes. Ivory balls lay on the green baize as if the Sisters had been recently at play. The whole room had in it a hush and splendour which affected the imagination with a kind of awe. How could I help thinking, as I sat alone, of that mystic drama in which Brother Prince had played the part of hero, "Madonna" Paterson the part of heroine?

"Do you work and play on Sundays?" I inquired of the First Anointed One, when he came back.

"We have no Sundays," he replied; "all days with us are Sabbaths, and everything we do is consecrated to the Lord."

They like to play games, I hear, on Sunday as a protest against the bondage of the world.

"Will you now come in to see Brother Prince?" said Thomas.

"Oh, yes," I answered softly; and the keeper of the Seven Stars and the Seven Golden Candlesticks led the way.

CHAPTER XXIII.

WITHIN THE ABODE.

"GOOD day, sir; I am glad to see you; take this chair," said a gentleman in black, with sweet, grave face, a broad white neckcloth, and shining leather shoes. He had come to meet me at the door; he led me quietly into a neat, luxurious parlour, and seated me in an easy chair beside the fire. The room was like a lady's boudoir; the furniture was rich and good; the chairs were cosy; and the ornaments were of the usual kind. I had come to Spaxton from a country house; and nothing in the room appeared to me much unlike what I had left behind, except the men and women who peopled it with life.

Prince sat in a semicircle of his elect; one brother and two sisters sitting on either side of him. On the wings of this half-circle sat the Two Anointed Ones; on the left wing, the Rev. Samuel Starky; on the right wing the Rev. George R.

Thomas. Next to Starky were Sister Ellen and Sister Zoe; next to Thomas were Sister Annie and Sister Sarah.

The Rev. Samuel Starky, eldest and whitest of my seven hosts, a tall, stout man of sixty-one years, with mild blue eyes, a little weak and wandering in expression, recalled to me at once the familiar faces of my Shaker friends. This gentleman was the first great convert made by Prince,—the first disciple who could bring to him the strength to be derived, in a courtly country such as ours, from money, education, social standing, and a firm position in the Church. He was a son of the Rev. John Starky, Doctor of Divinity, and of Maria Barbara, daughter of Sir Andrew Rolt, Baronet, and Lady Mary Alicia Coventry, through whom he was connected with half the peerage. Starky had been educated at Trinity College, Cambridge, and at the time of his conversion he held the living of Charlinch, where his father, the old doctor of divinity, had lived as rector for many years. His name was well known in these Somerset dales and woods, among the gentry of which the Starkys had always held their heads very high. The manner of his call had been strange,—as he

thinks, miraculous; since the Lord had not only saved his forfeit soul from hell, but snatched back his body from the jaws of death. While he had him absent from his parish, sick, and as some said, dying, in the Isle of Wight, Prince had come to Charlinch as his curate. "I was near to death," said the aged minister, as we afterwards paced the garden walks; "the doctor had given me up for lost; and I was told one morning by my nurse that I could not live until that night. At noon the post brought me a letter from a clerical friend in Bath, with a printed slip of paper, which he prayed might be read to me, if not too late, before I died. It was a sermon. I found the words not only full of grace, but full of God. They fell upon my soul like rain on a thirsty glebe. When the reading was done, I asked the preacher's name; and only then heard that he was my own new curate, Prince. I thanked God that He had sent this pastor to my flock. I felt very happy in my mind, said the last few words to my wife and sister, and then lay back to depart in peace. But I could not die. My pulse beat quicker; my tongue was loosened. Strength came back into my limbs; and in a few weeks after that call from a dying bed I was

at Charlinch, in my curate's arms." From that hour Starky has never left the master, at whose side he now stands as Second of those Two Anointed Ones, in whom is lodged the mystery of the Seven Stars, the Golden Candlesticks, and the Man whose name is the Branch.

Two of the four ladies who sat in this half-ring would have been thought comely in any place; one of them was very lovely, most of all so when her face was in repose. The first, a lady whom I heard the Brethren address as Sister Annie, was a very fine model of female beauty in middle life; plump, rosy, ripe; with a pair of laughing eyes, a full red cheek, and ripples of curling dark-brown hair. Some softness of the place lay on her, as on all the rest: hush in her movement, waiting in her eyes, and silence on her lips. She was the only woman whom I saw at Spaxton who seemed to be in perfect health.

The second lady, whom I afterwards came to know as Sister Zoe, was one of those rare feminine creatures who lash poets into song, who drive artists to despair, and cause common mortals to risk their souls for love. You saw, in time, that the woman was young, and lithe, and dressed in the purest taste; but you could not see all this at

once; for when you came, by a quick turn of the passage, into her presence, you saw nothing about her save only the whiteness of her brow, the marble-like composure of her face, the wondrous light of her big blue eyes. She sat there, nestling by the side of Prince; in a robe of white stuff, with violet tags and drops; the tiny streaks of colour throwing out into relief, as it were, the creamy paleness of her cheek. But for the beaming light in her eye, Guercino might have painted such a girl for one of his rapt and mourning angels. A high brow, an oval face, a small mouth and chin, a brown head of hair, pearl-like teeth, and those lustrous orbs! In fact, I do not know that I have ever seen a face more full of high, serene, and happy thought; and yet, while gazing on her folded hands and saintly brows, some instinct in my blood compelled me, much against my will, to think of her in connexion with that scene which had taken place in the adjoining church; that daring rite, the strangest mystery, perhaps the darkest iniquity of these latter days; through which Prince asserts, and Thomas testifies, that God has reconciled living flesh unto Himself, and introduced His final dispensation on the earth.

Of the other two ladies I shall say no more

than that Sister Sarah is young and tall, and that Sister Ellen is about fifty-five years old.

By what names these ladies had been known in the world I could not learn, except in one case, that of Sister Ellen, whose name of Perry I hit upon by chance. They make a secret of their family histories. "We have no business with the world, nor has the world anything more to do with us," said Starky. Once, when Sister Zoe was lifting up her voice to address me, as all the Sisters had done in turn, I asked by what name I should speak to her. "Zoe," she replied.

Now, it chanced, some time ago, that I had learned from another source the family name of the young lady who had been made the heroine of that mysterious rite in the Abode of Love, through which living flesh is said to have been reconciled and saved. That family name was Paterson; and I should have liked to hear whether Sister Zoe and "Madonna" Paterson were one.

"But think," I urged; "I am a layman and a stranger; how can I use these sweet, familiar names?"

"Pray do so," answered Zoe; "it is very nice."

"No doubt; if I were here a month; meantime it would be easier for me to call you Miss ——"

"Call me Zoe," she answered with a patient smile, "Zoe; nothing but Zoe."

Looking towards Prince, I said, "Do your people take new names on coming into residence, like the monks and nuns of an Italian convent?"

"Not like monks and nuns," said Prince; "we do not put ourselves under the protection of our saints. We have no saints. We simply give ourselves to God, of whom this mansion is the seat. At yonder gates we leave the world behind; its words, its laws, its passions; all of which we hold to be things of the devil's kingdom. Living in the Lord, we follow His leading light, even in the simple matter of our names. You will hear them all in time. They call me Beloved. I call this lady Zoe, because the sound pleases me. I call Thomas there, Mossoo, because he speaks French so well."

I never got with the Saints beyond this point. When I was bidding them good-bye, I said to Zoe, holding her hand in mine, "May I not hear some word to know you by when I am far away?"

"Yes; Zoe," she said and smiled.

"Zoe . . . what else?" Her thin lips parted, as if to speak. What was she about to say? Was the name that rose to her lips Paterson . . . a word

unspoken for years in the Abode of Love? Who knows? Instead of answering me, though her fingers were linked in mine, she turned to Prince, and whispered in her melting tones, "Beloved!" Prince answered to me for her, in a voice of playful softness; "She is Zoe; you must think of her as Zoe; nothing else."

CHAPTER XXIV.

BELOVED.

THE gentleman, who is called by his followers Beloved, in the sensuous idiom of the Song of Songs—is fifty-six years old, spare in person, of middle height, with a pallid cheek, and the traces of much pain and weariness on his wan cheek. His face is very sweet, his manner very smooth. He has about him something of a woman's grace and charm. His smile is very soft; and the key of his voice is low. He has the look of one who had never yet been vexed into rage and strife. In his eyes, which are apt to close, you see, as it were, a light from some other sphere. He sat in the centre of this group of men and women, rapt in his own dreams, into which he fell the moment we sat down before his warm and cheery fire. When the sound of voices roused him, he crossed his hands upon his black frock, put his shiny shoes on the rug, and bore a luxurious part

in my first long and singular conversation with the Saints.

In the Abode of Love, I had to hear again a good many things the like of which I had heard before. Elder Frederick on Mount Lebanon, Brigham Young in Salt Lake City, Father Noyes at Oneida Creek, had each received me in much the same way as Brother Prince received me at Spaxton. In every case I found a clue to these zealots' hearts through avenues opened to me by previous travels in the Holy Land. Every one has some question to ask about the Grotto in Bethlehem, the Fountain of Nazareth, the Garden of Gethsemane, the Tomb on Calvary; and I have always found that from these subjects to the great question of the Second Coming of our Lord —a profound conviction of which event lies at the root of all these social and religious creeds—is but a step. Prince talked a good deal; but he was rather full than frank in his discourse. He made many pauses; stopping to explain his words, unsaying what he seemed to have said; and on some points making openly large reserves.

On general questions he was frank enough. "You hold," I asked him, "that the day of grace is past?"

"We know," he answered, "that the day of grace is past; that Christ has left the mercy-seat; and that the day of judgment is at hand."

"You expect the world to pass away?"

"The old world is no more. God has withdrawn from it His own."

"Do you, then, hold that all mankind beyond these walls—the millions after millions of men and women, will all be lost?"

"It is God's will; not ours. Has it not always been so? How many men were sheltered in the ark? Was any man called save Abraham and his seed? How many men did Jesus draw aside unto Himself?"

"How many are you in the Abode?" I asked of Thomas.

"About sixty souls in all."

At this moment a man-servant, dressed in sober black, came into the room. "You count the domestics in that number?"

"Yes," said Thomas; "they are all members of our family and share its blessings."

"Do you take the service needed in the house, each in turn, like the Brethren and Sisters of Mount Lebanon?" I saw a faint smile ripple on the servant's face.

"Oh, no," broke in upon us Sister Ellen; "we do nothing of that kind; our people serve us; but they do it all in love."

"Do you mean," I said, "that they serve you without being paid their wages?" No reply was given to my question, except a laugh from the lady and a grin from the domestic.

"Among these sixty inmates, how many are male and female? How many are young, how many grown up?"

"The sexes are nearly equal," answered Thomas; "there are no children."

"None at all?" I asked, thinking of the Great Manifestation, and what was said to have come of it.

"You do not understand the life we live here in the Lord. We neither marry nor give in marriage. Those who married in the world aforetime, live as though they had not. Men house apart from women, and know no craving after devil's love; but are as the angels in heaven, in whom is eternal life."

"What do you wish me to understand as devil's love?"

"All love that is of the flesh—all love that is not holy, spiritual, and of God."

"Did I not see a child, a little girl, playing about on the sward just now?"

"She is the broken link in our line of life; a child of shame; a living witness of the last great triumph of the devil in the heart of man."

"You speak of Miss Paterson's child?"

"She is Satan's offspring—Satan's doing in the flesh," said Thomas, with deep emotion. A look of anguish clouded all their faces, except the face of Sister Zoe, who kept the sweet serenity of her countenance quite unmoved. "The work of that time," put in Sister Ellen, with a sigh, "was the saddest thing I have ever known. For one whole year we lay in the shadow of death, and near to hell; but God wrought out His purpose in us. It was a bitter time for all; but most for our Beloved."

"Your rule of life, then, is like that of nuns and monks—a rule of abstinence?"

"The rule of angels," answered Prince; "a rule of pure enjoyment in the Lord. Our brethren and sisters live in love, but not in sin; for sin is death, and ours is a life eternal in the Lord."

"Do you mean in the spirit, in another world, as all good men hope to live?"

"We mean alike in the body and in the spirit; for flesh is now saved and reconciled to God."

"Then you accept the physical resurrection as the doctrine is laid down in the English Church?"

"No; we reject that doctrine. We *are* the resurrection; and in that we are the life."

"Yet all men die?"

"Yes," said Thomas; "they have mostly done so; death has been men's portion, and they have died; but death is subject to the Lord in whom we live. We shall not die, unless it be His purpose not to save us."

"You expect to die?"

"No, never," said the First Anointed One; "we have no such thought."

"But some among you have passed away; Louisa Nottidge, for example?"

"Yes, the Lord has done His will upon them; they have erred, and they are gone; but many examples do not make a necessary rule. Elijah's kindred died in the flesh, yet the prophet was caught up into the heavens a living man. Though I should see that valley choking with ten thousand corpses, the sight would not convince me that I should one day have to die."

"You seem to think but lightly of the dead?"

"We think of them as men who have not been wholly saved; who have not been snatched from the power of Satan in the flesh. Those whom God has saved will live."

"Where do you bury the departed out of sight—in a churchyard, in consecrated ground, like other Christians, or in some lonely field, as the Shakers do?"

"Some lie at the farm, some rest under this green lawn; we have no consecrated ground; for we think the clay that is not saved alive, goes back into the earth from which it sprang."

"Seeing that you all grow older, and that some of you drop away, you must admit that death may come?"

"Not so," said Beloved, "we never think of death; we never expect it. We know that God is a living God, and that we are alive in Him. Death is a word that belongs to time."

"But we all live in time."

"You live in time," said Beloved; "we do not; and we know nothing of it."

"Have you no sense of time?"

"None," replied the First Anointed One. "These terms are yours, not God's; you have invented

them to represent earthly facts. We stand in another place."

"You see the sun rise and wane," I urged; "you know that yesterday was Friday, that to-morrow will be Sunday; that spring-time passes and the harvest comes about?"

"Well, yes," said Beloved, in a pitying tone; "we feel the flow of love which you have taken as your measure of time: but it is no sign of change to us, who dwell for ever in the living God."

To see how men of gentle birth, of college training, of ministerial office, living in the most conservative society and church in Europe, have been brought to admit these doctrines and to breathe these passions, we must go back a little way, and tell the story of their lives.

Mainly from their own reports, partly also from the reports of friends and enemies, the materials for the following sketches have been drawn.

CHAPTER XXV.

LAMPETER BRETHREN.

SOME thirty years ago, a group of young men of parts, who had been thrown together as students of divinity, in the college of St. David's, Lampeter, in Cardiganshire, had formed themselves into a praying and revival order, under the name of the Lampeter Brethren. St. David's was a new college, founded by Bishop Burgess, a few years earlier, for the training of young men on easier terms than Oxford and Cambridge offered, as ministers in the English Church; mainly with a view to supplying a better class of preachers to that branch of the Church which daily finds itself face to face with the spirit of dissent and separation in the southern counties of Wales. Up to that time, it had met with but a fair return of fruit. Fine scenery, a good house, and cheap living (near a capital trout stream), had done something for the prim little town. Students

had come in; a few pastors, mostly Welsh ones, had been sent out; but the spirit of the place had continued cold. The young men had thought more of catching fish than of saving souls. The fires of Oriel had hardly kindled in them the revival flame.

The Rev. Alfred Ollivant, vice-principal, was a man of the world, a high wrangler, a senior medallist, of much distinction in his craft, well trained in the subtleties of verbal fence; yet one, it was thought by some, who was less concerned for the souls of perishing sinners than for his own advancement in the Church. A sound scholar, a fine preacher, a keen critic, knowing his own work and worth, he was said by his more zealous pupils to be keeping a sharp eye on all such chances as might fall in his way of a rector's living or a professor's chair. He was so far an image of clay as to enjoy a rush across country, and to know the difference between port wine and claret; nay, he had been known, when his heart was glad, to listen with pleasure to an ancient ballad. For all these weaknesses, not to style them vices, the young revival students held him in contempt: as a wolf in sheep's clothing, as a creature on whom the devil had set his mark.

I must add, that in after years they came to see more clearly, and to speak more justly of this eminent divine. "Ollivant was a good man," Thomas said to me, during one of our conversations, at the Abode of Love. "We judged him sternly in our youth, but we think that since that time he has been good and wise, according to the measure of his light."

The means which these Lampeter Brethren proposed to use, in order to promote a glorious work in the college and in the town, was prayer. All true religion, they told each other, begins and ends with prayer. Prayer is the natural pathos of the soul. Prayer is the only path by which man may draw near to God. When a child of grace departs from his father's presence, it is because he has either ceased to pray, or forgotten how to pray aright. God cannot help but hear and answer prayer; and those happy souls who have managed to take heaven by violence have always captured it in prayer. To pray, therefore, is the first duty, and the highest profit of those who seek to do the will of God on earth. The young Lampeter Brethren desired to be known among both their English friends and their Welsh neighbours as the Praying Brotherhood. They met

to pray; and they sent out a call to such as might feel with them, to come and pray.

Prayer was their business; all their pleasure praise.

Like many of their brother mystics in every age of the Church, they adopted the Song of Solomon as their favourite book; reading it in the spiritual sense so often assigned to it by commentators; as a picture, drawn by a cunning hand, of that perfect passion which, in the fulness of time, was to inflame the regenerate soul towards Christ, so that the Lord and His Church might burn and fuse into one. Hence they never tired of murmuring, "Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth;" of crying in their zeal for Him, "Thy love is better than wine." In their dreams they heard a voice saying to them, "Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away;" and listening, as it were, in sleep, they heard a voice in the street cry out to them, "Open to me, my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled, for my head is filled with dew, and my locks with the drops of the night." All the warm words of this Song were on their lips, and all its delicious imageries lay about their hearts.

At first they had been few in number—half-

a-dozen, perhaps half-a-score; but, as they had left the gates of mercy open to the world, a few others had entered in. A dozen persons, perhaps, in all, threw in their lot with these revival youths; most of them students in the college, with two or three poor outsiders from the town. They had met in each other's rooms, where they prayed, and sang, and searched each other's hearts. "Kiss me with the kisses of thy mouth," they cried, . . . "thy love is better than wine, . . . thou hast ravished my heart, my sister, my spouse. . . . How fair and pleasant art thou, O love, for delights!" No one can say that in the midst of these soft and mystic yearnings they had spared each other's faults. With a keen and cruel zest they had bared all sores, and probed all wounds, groaning the while in spirit, and shedding tears of brine over what they beheld around them of a perishing world. In truth, their lines had been cast into a pleasant rather than into a holy place. Cradled in green woods, and lapped by shining waters, Lampeter lay in a valley rich in all natural beauties, but she was very far indeed from being clothed in piety and grace. The rough Welsh mining mob, who knew no idiom save their own, had been used to spend their Sundays and holi-

days in drinking, fighting, and blaspheming; the mining gentry were hardly better than the peasants and quarrymen; and even in the town itself, under the college walls, these hardy critics could find more offences than those which, in the Cities of the Plain, had plucked down fire from heaven. How could this perishing world be saved? By the college? No! cried these youths in their holy zeal. This sacred school was no whit better than the wicked quarry and decorous town. Their chief was known to be looking out for place; the rank and file of students were given to climbing hills and whipping streams, to quoting Horace and drinking beer. As the First among these Brethren said in his wrath, a stranger at St. David's might have gathered from their studies and demeanour, that the whole community was being prepared, not for service in the pulpit, but for strutting on the stage.

From these dead and dying worlds of sin, the Brethren had drawn themselves apart, to watch and pray; so that, when the day of wrath should come, they might be ready to flee out of the city and escape the consuming fire.

Among these young men were Henry James Prince, Arthur Augustus Rees, Lewis Price, George

Robinson Thomas, John Lewis, Thomas Williams, Thomas Evans, and David Thomas.

Their founder and leader was the first in this list, Henry James Prince.

Prince was a few years older than most of his friends — three or four years, perhaps, on the average—for divinity had not been his first attempt in life. He had come to St. David's College to begin his course at an age when he ought to have been a settled man; for when he entered his name on the roll of pupils, he had already passed into his twenty-sixth year.

CHAPTER XXVI.

BROTHER PRINCE.

PRINCE was born at Bath, in the year of wonder 1811, the season of the great comet—a thing which his admirers do not seem to have noted, since they would hardly have failed to draw strange morals from such a fact. As a boy, he lived with his mother and sister, gentlefolks who had once seen better days, and who then let lodgings in that city of dowagers, invalids, and preachers. They lived in Widcombe Crescent, Number five; their chief, if not only tenant, being Martha Freeman, a maiden lady of very uncertain age. Martha had money. The daughter of a West Indian planter, she had come from abroad to reside in Bath, on account of her feeble health and declining years, and had taken up her abode in the house of Mrs. Prince, a widow with a brood of boys and girls about her. Martha was a pious woman; a Roman Catholic by birth.

Prince was an ailing child, with a very bad stomach, and digestive organs always out of play. Like many other ailing children, he was very much open to religious comfort; delighting in going to church, in reading the Bible, and in saying his prayers. As he now sees and says, he was perfect in the Gospel, even as a child, and before the work of grace had begun in his soul. In these pious exercises he was very much urged and helped by the elderly maiden lady who had come to lodge in his mother's house. "You will not wonder at his love for Martha," said Brother Thomas to me, "when I tell you that he owed his conversion to her—that she was the means of bringing him to God."

The widow Prince had three sons, William, George, and Henry, with three or four daughters. One of her sons had gone into the Church, and she had hoped to see her youngest son, Henry, become a country doctor, a profession for which there is ample room in Bath. To this end he had been placed, at sixteen years of age, in the shop of an apothecary in Wells, where he had stayed, with intervals caused by sickness, for nearly seven years. More than once his hold on life was given up; once, at least, the Sacrament was

administered to him, in the presence of Martha Freeman, in his mother's room. When he went up to London, in the hope of being coached through his examination, he lodged in the Borough, walked the wards of Guy's Hospital, and kept his terms in Wells Street school. A friend of mine, Dr. Noble, who was his fellow-student, speaks of his way of life at that time in terms of highest praise. As a young man he lived in London like a saint. It is little to say that he neither drank, nor swore, nor gambled, nor ran wild in love. These are coarse words, and mean coarse things, quite foreign to his nature. He lived, so far as a keen observer saw, a life which was pure in thought as well as clean in fact. Vice offended him, not only in his feeling but in his taste.

In 1832, he passed Apothecary's Hall; took out his license to kill and cure; and got the appointment of medical officer to the General Hospital in Bath. Frail as any of his patients, Prince yet strove, with a young man's zest, to gain a place in the medical world. For nearly three years he held his course; then he had to ride up to town for counsel with doctors on a malady of his own; when he found that he had thrown away those years in fighting against

his fate. In London, a terrible sickness fell upon him, and a painful operation had to be performed. "I nearly bled to death," he says; "for a week I lay without moving, and it was five weeks before I could leave my room." During these waking nights and days, he made up his mind that he would strive no more, whether good or evil came of it; that he would no longer give his days to learning the surgeon's art. In the voice of Martha he heard a call to a higher work. He now took up his cross, and bent his spirit to the task of converting and saving souls; being at that time perfectly unaware that his own soul needed to be saved.

A change of scene, a sea voyage, a tour to the north, were recommended by his doctor, who thought that Bath was too warm and damp for him, and that the sharper air of a northern county would do him good. His brother lived near Durham, at the village of Shincliffe, near the cathedral city, where he held a living; and to him, by a round of sea-trips, Prince was sent; the course of his travels lying through Guernsey, London, Edinburgh, and Durham; in the last of which places he found his brother's neighbours in what appeared to him a very bad way.

The rough lads of the north astounded this good young man from Bath. They drank deep, they swore loud, they fought hard. The grown men loved their puppies and beat their wives. Few of these rude fellows put their heads into a church; their Sunday mornings being chiefly spent in fighting out quarrels of the previous week. Nor were the masters better than the men, except that their amusements were supposed by some to be of a less brutal kind. As Prince walked to church, he heard the hunter's cry come across the fields. The church, an old barn, was only a quarter full. Surely, he said to himself, here were a pasture and a field demanding an instant shepherd; these and many others like them in the north. Prince was told that these people hated parsons; he saw they did so, even though he stood in sight of the cathedral towers and theological schools of Durham; and he only grieved that he could not say, in his heart, that these rude people hated their pastors on account of their righteousness. He could not say so.

Next day he trudged into Durham; sought an interview with the college warden; learned the time and terms of studentship; resolved on the

spot that he would seek a door into the church, and give up his life to the task of saving souls from hell.

On going back to Bath he only changed this plan so far as to accept St. David's College, Lampeter, as a nearer and a cheaper place of study than Durham.

Martha Freeman was warm for Lampeter, which is far less distant from Bath than the northern university, and Martha's wish was a growing power in Widcombe Crescent. By this time the young Anglican had fallen into love with his elderly Catholic teacher, and the venerable spinster had fallen into love with her sickly charge. In truth, the action of this youth on the old maid, of this old maid on the young man, had been strange and strong. She had made him a Christian; he had made her an Anglican. While she had been drawing him into grace, he had been sapping in her the foundations of her early faith. Each had converted the other. To complete the string of contradictions, he had begun, while still regarding her as his spiritual mother, to look on her as a future wife. She was old enough to have been his mother in the flesh. "You must not think of Brother Prince," said Sister Ellen to me, "as courting and marrying

in the usual way; both his wives have been older than himself: Martha was an old woman when he took her." In fact, he seems never to have thought of Martha as another man would have been sure to think of a lady whom he proposed to make his wife. He dreamt of her only as a bride of the Spirit, as that sister and spouse about whom he had read so much.

When Martha and his other friends proposed that he should join the classes in Lampeter, in place of going to Durham, he paused in doubt. The rough lads in the north had been the means of forcing him into taking that instant step towards the Church. How could he run away from the scene of his call? He opened his favourite Canticles, the first chapter of which he read through once more with a beating heart, repeating to himself, as he sat in his room, gazing on the feeble charms of the woman who was at one and the same time his spiritual mother and his spiritual daughter, "Behold, thou art fair, my love; behold, thou art fair!" Then he got on the coach, and was driven from Bath into the loveliest scenery to be found in the south of Wales.

When he had first come to Lampeter he seems to have been considered, both by his masters and

by his fellows, as a shining light. His life was pure, his spirit eager, his aspect grave, his apprehension quick. Those who were rich in gifts of the Spirit had been drawn to him, as to a magnetic centre. Arthur Augustus Rees, who in after life became his fiercest adversary, admits not only that the new-comer was the glory of St. David's as to piety and learning, but that if ever man lived on earth like a saint, Prince was that man. Though feeble in body, he fasted much, and prayed still more. He took no delight in the doings of young men—in fishing, walking parties, and country jaunts—but gave up his nights to study, and spent his days in visiting the poor and the sick. Rees had been a sailor; but he had given up the quarter-deck for the pulpit; and being of nearly Prince's own age, he soon became his closest and dearest friend. One day Prince proposed to Rees that they should meet for prayer; a proposal which led to the institution known as the Lampeter Brethren, since other men, inspired by the Holy Ghost, came into fellowship with them, eager to labour with them for the good of souls. The students, generally, ridiculed first, and then resented, the foundation of this separate brotherhood; not without show of

reason, perhaps; since these brethren made it one of their formal rules that they should pray for themselves, *and for the college.* Some among the students went so far as to say they did not want these prayers, and nearly all of them regarded these meetings as implying on the part of Prince and his friends a superior sanctity, and a higher acceptance of the Lord. In fact, there could be no more dispute about Prince's spiritual pride than about his manner, his scholarship, and his morality. On one auspicious day he went to a christening; wine was passing freely round, and some zealous friend proposed that the company should join in drinking the baby's health. Prince, who objected to the toast as savouring of pride in the flesh, made a counter-proposal that they should fall down on their knees and pray for the good of the infant's soul. Another day he was asked to a party, given by the Rev. Alfred Ollivant on his promotion in the church. The bottle was being pushed about, and some one began to sing, when Prince rose up from the table, followed by Rees, and abruptly left the room; their departure being hailed by the company with jeers and hisses.

In the meetings of the Lampeter Brethren, Prince, with his soft voice and placid mien, affected a tone of authority which rather galled his friends, since he assumed a right to speak before them in the name and by the power of the Holy Ghost. Rees describes him at this date as a man of prayer and self-denial, careless of the world's praise, a powerful searcher of hearts, who lived in his own person a holy life, and who never spoke to the transgressor without effect. Many, said Rees, were blessed in his ministry; and when Prince came finally into the public avowal of that faith which has since shaped his course, this pious and steadfast friend, who had known him better than any one else in Lampeter, could only exclaim in anguish and despair, "Thus fell that dear child of God!"

CHAPTER XXVII.

CHARLINCH.

AFTER Prince had passed and been ordained for service, he received the offer of a curacy at Charlinch; which offer he laid before the Lord in prayer; and after much waiting for a sign, he accepted it, in the firm belief that by going to Charlinch he was obeying the will of God.

The Rev. Samuel Starky, Rector of that parish, being sick and absent, the whole duty of the church fell upon the new curate, and the new curate's wife. Yes, upon his wife; for among the changes which had come upon Prince, before he left Lampeter, was that of being married to Martha Freeman, the bride of his soul.

Before the newly wedded pair removed from Cardigan to Somerset, a work of grace is said to have been accomplished in the soul and in the flesh of Prince. As he told me himself, he died to the flesh, and was born a second time to the

Spirit. He put off the old man, he discarded self, he ceased to commit sin, and even to be capable of sin. As I sat with him in his own parlour at the Agapemone he put the question of this change in his person beyond reach of doubt. "In me," he said, with a gravity which was almost solemn, "you see Christ in the flesh, Christ in my flesh." The Holy Spirit, as he told me in so many words, had entered into him, had died in him, so that his old body was no longer living, and the form in which he moved was a new creation of the Lord, like unto the old, but not the old. From that time he had become identified in body and in soul with the Holy Spirit. I asked Prince if he wished me to understand that he thought himself an incarnation of the Spirit? He would not use the word incarnate, because Sister Zoe and Sister Annie would not then be able to follow us in what we said, since they were not scholars and metaphysicians; but he declared that the Holy Spirit was in his flesh, and was his flesh, and that he had no wish, no hope, no life apart from the Holy Spirit.

At Lampeter he had fallen in with the writings of Gerhard Tersteegen, the German mystic and psalmist; in which he had found the record of a vague, yet sweet and tender longing for com-

munion with the Heavenly Father, answered to the soul's content, by an assumed absorption of the human supplicant in the personality of God. In Tersteegen, the absorption is, I think, to be understood of the will only; but Prince, who clove to this divine idea, sought to make it true, not of the will only, but of the flesh. From this old German dreamer, he learned to think little of himself, to distrust his own insight, his own reasoning power. What is the use of intellect in a fallen creature, prone from his birth to sin? What shall it profit a man if he gain the world and lose his own soul? The wage of sin is death. What hope then shall a sinner find in his perishing state? None. Prince thought and said, "Except in the free love of God in Christ." Man could do nothing of himself to save his soul, for the malady under which he suffered was past his finite powers. The fall of man is in the spirit. Prince laid down the dogma of salvation thus: "Sin must be *pardoned* in the CONSCIENCE, ere it can be *subdued* in the HEART."

Hence, on his own part, he became eager to shed the consciousness of self; to nurse no wishes of his own; to wait and watch for the divine suggestion; and to yield up every thought of his soul to guidance from above. Day by day

he parted from the world. If he was going out for a stroll, he would inquire of God whether it would rain. If he wanted a chair in his room, he would ask leave of the Spirit to buy one. He would not put on a new coat, take up an umbrella, without resort to prayer. Nay, he abandoned the habit of judging for himself in the commonest things, to follow what he called the promptings of the Spirit, even when they urged him to act against what seemed to be his good.

Of the great change which he said took place in his soul, it would be unfair to give any other story than his own. Indeed, he felt some doubt whether it was lawful even for himself to enter upon this sacred theme. "I have passed," he said, "right through the middle of life, and come out on the other side into God." Elsewhere, and in other words, he describes himself as having died to the flesh. "I die daily. My inward life is undergoing a gradual destruction." At last his will was slain and put away. The man, Henry James Prince, existed no longer; he had been crucified in the flesh and in the spirit; and all that remained of what had once been the Lampeter student, was a visible embodiment of the Holy Spirit.

Charlinch, the village in Somerset to which the spiritual pair, at once mother and son, bridegroom and bride, removed from Lampeter, lay in a low valley, on a cross road, far from the world; it had two hundred ploughmen, a careless and distant gentry, an absent pastor, and a good fat glebe. The church was small and poor, in a fine position, on a high knoll, from which the eye swept joyously along copse and corn-field to the dark green hills; but the tower was rent, the roof was unsafe, the graveyard heaped and rough. Pews of the bad kind blocked up all the space inside; and the sacred edifice had, on the whole, a look of dirt, neglect, and death. Two houses stood on the hill of Charlinch, and flanked the church; the rectory on one side, on the other side a farm. The rectory was a good stone house, built in a garden, fenced by a high wall, and sheltered by rows of trees. Under this wall lay the glebe land; a fine fat field, which dropped down a sunny slope, and sent into the pastor's mill abundance of golden grain. Farms dotted the rolling valley, and parks adorned the ascending slopes. As to the people who dwelt in these farms, they were brutish and dull, perhaps, rather than vicious and lost. If a stranger in this valley

has a sense of being suddenly swept back into the Heptarchy, nothing suggests to his mind the wickedness which flourished in the cities of the Plain. From Starky I learned that neither in his early days nor since has there ever been a publichouse in Charlinch!

Into this rough bucolic Eden, Prince and his bride were suddenly thrown. Now, thought Prince, was the time for God's reign to commence on earth; and as he gazed from the rectory window over the sleepy hollow up towards the Quantock hills, he felt his soul inspired to begin the work. Martha was at his side, his faithful and devoted spouse, frail in body, bent with suffering, and white with age, yet ready for her share, and more than her share, of toil in this vineyard of the Lord.

For more than twelve months after his coming to Charlinch, Prince went on pounding away at his rough quarry; the simple staring, the cynics laughing, at what they thought the fun of his revival warmth. For a long time the revival passion burnt in him without igniting his hearers. Three persons from an adjoining parish clomb up the hillside to his house, and spoke with him about their souls; but no man, no woman, in his own con-

gregation made a sign. What should he do next? His sister, his spouse, was sickening of her work; and she became so feeble, that her husband was compelled to carry her to Bath. His heart began to faint. But his reward was nearer than he thought; for some of his sermons had appeared in print, and one of them had found its way to the bed-side of his rector in the Isle of Wight, on whom it had wrought what seemed to him a miraculous call. On his sudden and strange recovery from sickness, the Rev. Samuel Starky had set out for Charlinch, where he found his curate struggling with his misery, and took the sufferer to his heart. The Lord, says Prince, united these two men in one body and one soul. Starky had private means, and, what was of yet more moment to his curate, he was a man of mild and yielding temper, who from admiration for Prince became a Lampeter brother, and adopted his theory of the Holy Spirit. Prince reports that, although this friend supported him by prayers and goodwill, he did not presume to meddle with his work. Five new cases of conversion came before him; among them an old fellow of seventy-five; a widow of eighty; a wicked old crone of seventy-four. These were but the first-fruits of his zeal.

A stir was now seen in the church; a farmer, a farmer's wife, a roadster, a milkmaid, came in for ghostly counsel; in a few weeks nearly thirty persons had become alarmed for their souls. Prince called a meeting for prayer on Tuesday evening; he gave a lecture on Friday evening; he founded a special meeting for prayer on Sunday morning, before the ordinary congregation came to church. A month later, he was bold enough to set apart one night in the week for prayer; when the more zealous of his followers could spend the night together,—praying, chanting, groaning, weeping,—asking God to vouchsafe a sign of His presence, to pour out His Spirit on their minister, and to show them the day of an especial grace.

Starky grew limp and low; this tumult overpowering him, so that he could not preach, and hardly read the service. One Sunday, when he climbed into the pulpit, he could not speak; his mouth was shut up as by an angel; he could only sob out his excuses, and beg the people who had faith in prayer to come into the rectory, and help him to pray for light. About fifty persons followed him into the house, and kneeling down in rows, poured out their souls to God.

Rumours of this scene ran through the towns and combes between the Polden hills and the Quantock hills. From Bridgwater and Spaxton, from Cannington and Over Stowy, crowds came pouring in to see the dumb parson—mobs which collected in the village, and then hurried into the church to laugh and jeer. One Sunday the silent man gave tongue. The church was crowded with people, among whom there was much idle and profane curiosity, but not, I fancy, much devotion. Starky, who was still shut up—"a mere dumb dog," as our Puritan fathers used to say, walked to his desk as usual, and stood by his book, to see how the Lord would deal with him that day. A spirit of prayer fell on him. He knelt, and poured out a flood of words; then, rising to his feet, he read the text in a clear voice, and preached a sermon such as those who heard it never could forget—a strain not loud and fierce, as of high human eloquence, but soft, and sad, and solemn as life and death; "searching as fire, heavy as a hammer, and sharper than a two-edged sword." A strange fear fell on the people. Many of the men dropped their heads on their chests; nearly all the women sobbed and shrieked; one impenitent urchin laughed.

Prince now proposed that they should winnow the harvest, separating the grain from the chaff, the converted from the lukewarm; but the lukewarm did not like to be called chaff, and when they saw that Prince was not a man to go back in what he said, they got up stories against him and his friend. They were the higher class of farmers, artisans, and dealers. They paid their tithes, they rode to hunt, they dressed in decent clothes; in fact, they considered themselves as the very flower of the Charlinch flock. These men made a noise which was heard by the Right Reverend Father in God, George Henry Law, in his palace at Wells, where the report of a revival riot was anything but welcome to the aged bishop. The chaff, on being winnowed, not only left the church, but used their power to prevent their wives and servants from attending either the evening or the Sunday service. Broils arose in these farms. Women, prevented from going to the evening meetings, said they would leave their homes; husbands, black with jealousy and anger, threatened that if the women went to meeting they would kill them; boys and girls quarrelled with their parents, servants with their masters; while the ungodly rabble took advantage of this

uproar to hoot and curse. Starky, now under Prince's rule, would not listen to advice from without to go back to the usage of an older time, when every man in Charlinch went to church and enjoyed his Sunday nap. In the end, the advisers of his aged and venerable bishop came down from Wells with his mandate, and silenced the revival priest.

Prince now paused in doubt, and, but for the counsel of Rees and others of the Lampeter Brethren, he would probably have gone out at once from the Established Church. On finding that peace could be restored to Charlinch and the nearer parishes only by Prince's removal to another county, Bishop Law's advisers asked him to resign his license, and seek a field of usefulness in the Church elsewhere. But how could a revival preacher be made to see that a prudent course was the line for him to take? Prince replied to his bishop's counsellors that these things were of God, and not of man; that he had not come to Charlinch of his own design; and that he could not leave it save by an intimation from above. Then came an order to deprive him. How was he to take this signal? Prince went to his room, and fell upon his knees. Was this mandate from

Wells a summons from on high? At first he thought it was; so he took a room, where he announced that in future he should preach to such as would come and hear him. Some few farmers left their church; not many, but enough to form a centre for restless souls. Thus began the movement, which ended, after Starky had also been deprived, in what was called the Charlinch Free Church.

In the midst of these commotions Martha died. Then, with a swiftness which shocked his enemies and amazed his friends, the doting husband of this fairest among women was married to a second wife.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

GOSPEL LOVE.

"You must not judge of what Beloved may do by common rules," said Starky, when I told him how such haste in marrying a second time affected men and women of decent mind. "It was a great affliction to him, but he could not put the thing away." I must have smiled at these words of the Anointed One; for he added, in a pleading tone: "You judge him ill; he could not help it, since it was the will of God."

"That he should marry a second time?"

"It was done for God's glory, not man's profit."

The second wife, as I learned elsewhere, had a small annuity of eighty pounds a-year. "I was near him," Starky said, "all through this trial. I saw him suffer in the body and in the spirit. I suffered with him; and I also suffered with his wife, who was my sister and my nurse, my best

companion, and my dearest friend. None of us could help it. Neither he nor she would willingly have undergone that fiery ordeal. They became man and wife, not of their own desire, but simply because it was the will of God."

To put this second bridal before the reader's eyes in its completeness, I must go back to the earlier love.

While Prince was still living at Lampeter, waiting for the time when he could pass and be ordained, two great passions would appear to have all but absorbed his being; one passion a carnal craving for Martha Freeman, the spiritual mother and pupil whom he had left in Widcombe Crescent; the other passion a mystical desire to become united in soul and body, if such thing could be, with the Holy Ghost. And these two yearnings had become so mixed and fused in the reveries to which he gave himself up, that the carnal desire could not be separated from the spiritual craving, nor the spiritual craving from the carnal desire. The dreamer, in his own person at least, appeared to have lost all sense of the difference felt by ordinary men between flesh and spirit, spirit and flesh.

The truth would seem to be, that Prince had

pondered over the Song of Songs until the allegorical and sensuous images of that wondrous lyric in prose had got themselves tangled and transformed within his busy brain. The words had described his love, the comments pictured his desire. A roe upon the mountains had been to him an image of his beating pulse and his bounding feet; while the rush and heat of the young damsel in the Song had replied like an echo to the throbbings of his heart. Thus, the lines which, seeing how sacred were the things which he took the verse to mean, should have divided, like heaven from earth, the Shulamite girl from the West Indian spinster, had come to be in his eyes weak and faint. This feeble and fading woman in Widcombe Crescent had been his love, his dove, his sister, his spouse, his fair one. Day and night he had cried out to her in the silence of his thoughts and dreams, Thou hast ravished my heart, my sister, my spouse; thou hast ravished my heart with one of thine eyes! As he lay on a sick bed, turning in pain, his thoughts would stray into the Syrian vineyard, into the garden of nuts, and linger with joy among the lilies and fig-trees. Martha had been the sister, the spouse, who rose to admit him, her hands dropping with

myrrh; and he had called upon God in his prayers to unite him for ever with this bride of his soul. But this love for a creature whom he knew to be fallen like himself, though burning in his veins and glowing in his words with the old nether fire, had been blent and fused in his imagination with that which he would have described as his more sacred passion for the Holy Spirit. One had been part of the other, and he had never thought of them as two things, but as one thing. When his soul had gone forth, as it were, towards Martha, it had only done so by permission from the Holy Ghost. When he had prayed for union with his beloved, it was only after waiting for a sign and seeing that such was the will of God. Not my will, but Thine be done, had been the burthen of every plea which he put up. Twice or thrice as he lay in pain, a doubt would creep into his soul: might not his love for Martha, and his love for God, conflict? What if he should receive a sign? Could he give up his fair one, his sister, his spouse? Dark and long had been the hours in which these questions tormented the student's soul. Could he give up his spiritual bride at the call of God? Of earthly things he had yearned for nothing as he panted

after her. Even while he sat in church, while he knelt in prayer, he had felt her presence in his brain. She had become his second spiritual self. He felt that he could neither live nor die without her; and it seemed to him as though heaven itself could hardly be won, or thoroughly enjoyed, unless they gained it together; entering upon it in that strange and complex relation in which they had come to stand towards each other in the spirit, as mother and son, as father and daughter, as bridegroom and bride.

They had married in Bath, and spent their honeymoon at Clifton. Long in the feeblest health, the aged woman and her youthful partner had been equally rapt and awed by the reviving power which love and idleness may exert upon this frame of clay. Rest from hard work, rides on the breezy down, and rambles by the winding stream, had told their tale in more buoyant spirits and less pallid cheeks. The student and his wife had gone down from Clifton to Lampeter, renewed in life and purified in soul; the bridals into which they had entered being pure and holy; bridals of the spirit and not of the flesh.

In due season Prince got ordained as a priest, and received that offer of a curacy at Charlinch,

which had roused the Somersetshire village, and killed his venerable wife.

After being silenced by Bishop Law, under protests which had caused much scandal in the Church, making a new preferment difficult for him to gain, Prince waited on the Lord for a sign whether he should or should not now secede from an Establishment ruled by men like Law. I infer from what Starky told me at the Agapemone, that he listened to reason in a lower sphere. Things were not yet so bad with him that he could make a merit of despair. His sermons were being read and admired. Many of the clergy were disposed to go with him in his revival zeal. One by one, his friends among the Brethren were obtaining livings; and he saw that secession on his part would compel these curates either to give up their leader or to separate from the Church. Starky being rector of the parish, he could put any one whom Prince might choose into his place. More than all, Starky had heard from a friend at Clare, in Suffolk, that a young man was wanted for clerical duty at Stoke, near Halstead, in that county, one of the finest and most famous churches in East Anglia. This call to a new life in the field of his early choice, was not to be put aside;

and in a few days, after praying and waiting on the Lord, the silenced curate made up his mind to abide for yet a little while in the church of his living mother and of his departed wife. He got the Rev. George R. Thomas, one of his Lampeter friends, appointed to his desk at Charlinch; he married Julia Starky; and then he crossed the country from Somerset to Suffolk.

CHAPTER XXIX.

SECESSION.

STRIFE and scandal went with the ardent pastor to his new abode. Having to deal at Stoke with a coarse and loutish population of farmers, whom he sought to inflame with his own revival warmth, Prince contrived, in less than a year, to set the parish and surrounding district in a blaze. Some of the rough south folk enjoyed the fun; parties were formed; and the decent service of the church was much disturbed. Dr. Allen, Bishop of Ely, treated the revival curate with skill and kindness, until he saw how little a few dashes of episcopal rose-water had power to quench his burning zeal. After bearing with Prince for a second year, and finding that trouble grew upon him daily, the good bishop had to send the firebrand away from Stoke. But in giving up his second pulpit, Prince contrived, as he had formerly done at Charlinch,

to name his successor; the man whom he chose as the new curate being a young Lampeter brother, the Rev. Lewis Price.

Prince now paused in his career. In the Church of England it seemed as though he could find no ground on which to build his camp. He had made one convert who had power to aid and comfort him; he had married this disciple's sister; and through his wife he could boast a far-away alliance with dukes and earls. He had placed a few of his staunchest friends in livings. But then, how worldly he had found the Church! The right reverend fathers, Law and Allen, were hardly less images of clay than that college principal at St. David's whom he had felt himself bound to rebuke. What should he do? How could he toil in the same vineyard with these worldlings? With much appearance of seeking light, he waited on the Lord, and in less time than Jeremiah had used in prayer, he saw that he must seek his field elsewhere. By man, a second door had been closed against him; he now asked for the opening of a door which could never be shut in his face, while he was going about his Master's work. Where could such a door be found except beyond the pale of that cautious and conservative

church in which timid old men like Law and Allen were enthroned?

While he was waiting on the Lord, not without gifts and smiles from elderly spinsters in the neighbourhood, his brother-in-law, Starky, came to Stoke. Starky had now been silenced by his bishop and that bishop's agents. Things were getting worse with the Lampeter Brethren; for not only had Starky been suspended from his clerical office, but the Rev. George Thomas was in trouble with his superiors at Charlinch, and the Rev. Lewis Price was quarrelling with his parishioners at Stoke.

A council was convened, at which Starky, Price, and Prince were present; when it was agreed among them that Prince and Starky should openly quit the Church and try their fortunes in a new line of Gospel labour; pitching their tents for this purpose in the two most fashionable watering-places of Sussex and Dorset; Prince going to Brighton, Starky to Melcombe Regis. They had some money; that is to say, Starky and his sister had some money. How could it be spent so well as in the service of the Lord?

Prince rode down to Brighton, where he hired

a place in Windsor Street, which he called Adullam Chapel, and began to gather about him from the crowd of saints and scoffers on the Grand Parade a congregation who were quickly known in all the dowager tea-rooms as the Adullamites. Starky went down to Weymouth, where he hired a house in Belfield Terrace, and preached when he could find a clerical friend in the town who was willing to lend him a church.

In Adullam Chapel, Brighton, Prince was free to speak; and here he first proclaimed, though under veiled and guarded imagery, that the promised Comforter was come. Among his closer followers, he announced this view of his own mission and character in the clearest terms.

The Lampeter Brethren held a meeting to consider how they could do most good; in other words, how they could act together, and what they should now attempt to do. Rees, Starky, Price, and the rest were present, with Prince in the chair. Minutes of the resolutions to which they came were drawn up, which Prince put into his pocket, and took away with him. A few days later, each of the Brethren received a copy of rules, drawn up in Prince's own way, and differing much from the minutes. Rees, who

had been a sailor in his youth, and still retained much of the bluff and open manner of the sea, objected to those changes. Prince would have silenced Rees by the grand rejoinder that the very words of these rules which had been given for their guidance, were dictated through him, and in him, by the Holy Spirit. Rees had gone with his friend thus far; he had been the first to extol his piety, his learning, his eloquence; he had been his brother, his disciple, his beloved; but the young sailor could not bring himself to admit that his friend was God. He wrestled with Prince, to save him from what he thought a tremendous fall. Unable to convince his leader of presumption, he withdrew from the society, and returned to Sunderland, where he set up a free church in connexion with the Baptists, and became known to the world as the ablest and yet fairest of his old comrade's foes. He is still alive, an eloquent and useful man; who has been sometimes heard in London pulpits during recent years.

Price, Starky, Thomas, Cobbe, were among the faithful, whom this new pretension of their leader could not drive away. William Cobbe, a brother of Miss Frances P. Cobbe, the writer on social sub-

jects, was a civil engineer, employed in a place of trust on the Exeter and Bristol line. He had fallen into the revival vortex, and when Starky and Prince had both been driven out of Charlinch by their bishop, he had come to the help of Thomas by building a free church in the valley, about half-a-mile from Charlinch hill. This new edifice, larger and handsomer than the old one, stood in a country lane, in a cluster of cottages and farms; and as Thomas, a good preacher and popular man, conducted the service, many persons were drawn away to it, who would otherwise have gone to their parish church.

If Prince had been content to work and wait, he might have succeeded in founding in Sussex, Dorset, and Somerset, a powerful sect. But either he would not work, or he could not wait. The seed which he planted had not time to sprout and bear. He put in his sickle ere the corn was ripe; and in place of an abundant harvest of grain, he found in his hand a mere bundle of straw.

Starky had hired a house in Belfield Terrace, Weymouth, to which Prince—after scattering the seeds of his faith in Brighton, where he was much admired—went down. There they set up an Abode of Love, on a tiny scale, and preached

in a tavern on the coming of the Holy Ghost. From among the farmers of Dorset, and the dowagers of Melcombe, the two men made plenty of additions to their flock. The doctrines which they preached were comforting to the pious mind; for they declared—with shouts and songs—that the Son of Man was about to come; that the world was in its latest day; that the godly few were being chosen from the mass; and that the wicked many were about to perish in penal fires.

Into the assembly-room of the Royal Hotel—where the officers hold their balls, and the singing women give their concerts—Prince invited his followers and disciples, to whom he made known the fact—which he had hitherto veiled in hints and parables—that the time for winnowing the world had come; for separating the wheat from the chaff; garnering up the harvest, and casting out the refuse into heaps. In his solemn tones, he declared that the day of grace was past—the day of judgment come. A door had been opened for the chosen; it was now closed for ever. Those who had not entered in, would find no passage. The angel who had sat in the mercy-seat was gone, and his throne was now empty in the heavens. The lost were lost—the saved were

saved. With a sad and sober joy, Prince told his audience of bucolic squires and ancient dames that in the hour of wrath, when the earth and the skies would be passing away in fervent heat, all those —but only those—who had now received the Holy One (in his own person) would be snatched from the burning wreck.

A hundred aged spinsters, with a few children, and perhaps as many men, are said to have composed the whole of this chosen band.

Prince, however, assured me that these numbers were below the truth. Five hundred persons, he says, were gathered in that day unto God.

CHAPTER XXX.

BUILDING THE ABODE.

WHERE should these saints take up their rest? Thomas and Cobbe had built, in the green country lane, at Spaxton, near Charlinch, in the midst of their first disciples, a handsome stone chapel, in which they held service, and to which many of the people of the district still adhered. The situation of this chapel was choice, secluded, and poetic. Springs and becks abounded near it. The hills were clothed with chestnut, oak, and fir; the land was fat with corn; the woods were rich in game; and the Saxon people in the dales and combes were soft and slow. Bridgwater, the nearest town, lay four miles off, and was only to be gained by cross and difficult roads. If any place, even in the west country, could be said to lie out of the world, it was Spaxton. Here, then, Heaven itself appeared to have given these saints a home, in which they might dwell in peace, waiting for that solemn hour

in which God was to be reconciled through Prince to the living flesh, so that it should not die.

The house in which Beloved and his witnesses lived in Belfield Terrace, Weymouth, was an Abode of Love; the brothers and sisters dwelling under one roof, living a celibate life, serving the Lord and waiting until He should come. But this house in Belfield Terrace was neither large enough nor pleasant enough for the elect. A mansion, a garden, an estate, were wanted as a dwelling-place meet for the Lord of all this earth; things to be found, so Thomas and Cobbe reported, in the Spaxton bottom, round about the free church which they had built; but then, these low and fertile lands belonged to sinners, who would not give them up, as a free offering, to the Lord and His saints. How could the purchase-money be raised? What had the Apostles done when they wanted gold? Had they not called upon the brethren to throw their wealth into a common fund?

Scripture goes a long way with the pious mind. What had been said in Judea, might be said in Dorset. Prince, Starky, Williams, and other of these Brethren, began to whisper among their wards, that the second pentecost being come, all

those who would flee from the evil day, must sell what they had in store, gather up the produce of this sale, and bring it as an offering to the Lamb.

A movement, subtle, singular, romantic, now set in; quickening a holy zeal in hundreds of men, in whom such mystery of sacrifice would not have been expected to find a home. Craftsmen sold their tools, grocers their stock, farmers their land, to throw their possessions into a common fund. Those who could do no more, brought in a basket of eggs, a pail of milk, a cart-load of straw. The chosen met together in the fashion of the ancient Agapæ, to eat and drink, to sing and pray, to look for signs and wonders, and to rejoice as one family in the Lord. The world was near its end; the chosen were to live henceforth as one body of saints; to live as brothers and sisters, cherubs and seraphs, united in the Son of Man. Old relations of blood and wedlock were now to be either dissolved or changed. A saint was required to give up all the world, whether in the shape of house and land, of father and mother, of wife and child; taking God in future for his all in all. Love was to be continued and increased, for God is love; but courtship was to become an exercise of the soul,

while wedlock was to shed its old relations with the carnal man. Those who were single were to keep so; those who were married were to live as though they were not. A man was to be to his wife a spiritual husband; a woman was to be to her husband a spiritual wife.

In the midst of so many renunciations, what was the sacrifice of a few acres of land, of a small sum in consols? In the day of wrath all property would be dirt. Of what value are gold and jewels to a spirit that is born afresh? As the Servant of the Lord had been slain in the flesh, and raised in the spirit, so were they, his children of the new life, about to witness a sudden change. The day and the hour were nigh. In every assemblage of the chosen, either Starky or Thomas rose up, and cried with a quick voice, as of a trumpet—

Lo! He cometh!

When the world should be burning into ashes, and the skies should be melting in the fervent heat, where would be the use of their flocks and herds, their corn and fruit, their rank and state? Could they ride on horses to the throne of grace? Could they drive in chariots to the judgment-seat? Sell what thou hast, had been the divine injunction to the called; and who on

the edge of doom would stand and dispute the word of God?

Not all the farmers of Dorset, not all the dowagers of Melcombe; some of these sold their consols, those their farms, for the Lord—perhaps I should say, for the Servant of the Lord. Prince became the general banker and trustee for all the saints whom he had saved. If he wanted money he would send for it. "Sister Jane," he would write, "the Lord has need of fifty pounds. Amen:"—and Sister Jane would send him either her purse or cheque. Some large, and many small sums were paid into this treasury of God. Starky threw into the fund a thousand pounds. Julia, as the second of Prince's elderly spiritual wives, settled on the Lamb her annuity of eighty pounds a-year. Hotham Maber and four of his sisters contributed among them no less a sum than ten thousand pounds. Maber, I need not add, has been one of the chief witnesses for Prince, and is now the Angel of the Seventh Seal. More money yet, much more money, was wanted before they could think of retiring from Adullam Chapel in Brighton, and from the Royal Hotel at Weymouth, into such a retreat as would be found a worthy dwelling-place for God and His

saints. As a rule, the Lampeter Brethren were poor, and the things of life had not gone well with them. Price could not help; Thomas had done his best; and most of the others stood sorely in need of all that could be done for them. If an Abode of Love were ever to be built for the Lord in that Spaxton bottom, so that His love might be manifested towards the flesh, the money must be raised from some other source.

Now, it chanced that among the converts to his theory of the Holy Ghost whom Prince had made, there were five spinster ladies of the name of Nottidge, each of whom had money of her own. The father of these old maids, Josias Nottidge, a retired Bermondsey merchant, had lived at Rose-hill, near Clare, in Suffolk, a short drive from Stoke, the hamlet to which Prince had removed after his affair in Charlinch. Harriet, Agnes, Clara, Cornelia, and Louisa, five of his unmarried girls, the youngest being about forty, the eldest of no particular age, had been drawn in spirit towards the young revival preacher. The old Bermondsey tradesman had jeered at their pet curate; their mother had declined to receive him into her house; but these elderly damsels had only clung

to Prince the more closely for what they called this persecution of the world; and when their father died, leaving them six thousand pounds a-piece, three of these five sisters, Harriet, Agnes, and Clara, had left their home at Rosehill, near Clare, and taken a house near Adullam Chapel, in Windsor Street, Brighton, so as to enjoy the benefit of living in the light of their pastor's eyes. From Brighton they had followed him to Weymouth, and after that gathering of Saints in the ball-room of the Royal Hotel, when Prince and his chief disciples had proposed that the chosen ones should repair to Spaxton, there to found an Abode of Love, these three ladies had cast in their lot with the elect. When the company of Saints crossed the hills from Weymouth into Somersetshire, the three ladies rode with them, travelling by the same coach, but lodging in different inns at night.

At Taunton, where they rested for a few days, the Brethren lodged at Giles' Hotel, the three spinster ladies at the Castle Inn. Here a little scene took place. Early one day Prince sent over to the Castle Inn for Harriet, the eldest sister, who put on her bonnet and went across the street to Giles' Hotel; where Prince, who received her in

the presence of his wife Julia, and the Rev. Samuel and Mrs. Starky, told her, with great concern of heart, that it would be for the glory of God if she would marry his young friend, the Rev. Lewis Price. The maiden blushed, then answered she was ready; on which the Servant of the Lord bade her go back in peace to the Castle Inn, and to lock this secret closely in her heart. Next he sent for her sister Agnes, a prouder spirit, with whom he felt that he must take a stronger course. "Agnes," he said to her, when she came into the Inn parlour; "God is about to confer on you a special blessing; but ere I tell you what it is, you must give me your word to obey the Lord and accept His gift." Agnes paused; but, thinking it could do her no harm to accept a blessing, she gave her word. "Then," said Prince, "in a few days you will be united in marriage to Brother Thomas." Such a gift as a husband was unexpected by the lady, and her maiden coyness pleaded for delay, as there would be kinsfolk to consult, and settlements to make. "You will need none of these things," Prince replied; "in this affair you must think, not of the world, but of God."

"But my mother," Agnes pleaded.

"God is your father and your mother," said Prince.

"Lawyers," she urged, "take time."

"Why do you want a lawyer, dear?" asked Mrs. Starky.

"Well," said the blushing spinster, "for the children's sake."

"You will have no children," Prince broke in; "your marriage with our brother will be spiritual only; your love to your husband will be pure, according to the will of God."

Agnes bowed her head, and could not say him nay; but she went out from Giles' hotel that morning with a heavy heart.

Later in the day, the two sisters were invited to come over from the Castle Inn to dine with Prince in his room at Giles' hotel, where they met the two curates, Price and Thomas, the new lords whom they had taken, and were duly presented to these young men as their future brides. Two days later, Clara was persuaded to accept of Cobbe. By these arrangements eighteen thousand pounds of the old Bermondsey merchant's money were swept into the hands of those who had control of the common fund.

The three sisters, finding themselves so sud-

denly engaged, would like to have gone home to Rosehill for a while; but to this course Prince objected, telling them that such a course was not in harmony with the will of God. He forbade them to consult a friend, or even to write one line to their mother, until the knots were tied. Harriet and Clara yielded up the point. Agnes made more stir about a settlement of her money. Thomas would not hear the word, although he was willing to invest her property in their joint names; and after a loud remonstrance, she submitted to her fate. All the details were arranged in prayer. Prince had a call that these three marriages should be solemnised at Swansea, in Wales; to which town the whole party went away. The three women had not one old friend near them. Starky gave away the brides; Prince looking on, but taking no active part. Within a few days of their vows being whispered, the property of Harriet and Clara was made over, in bulk, to Prince; and by him invested in the purchase of a nice house, a large garden, and a good estate, for the new Abode of Love.

CHAPTER XXXI.

AFTER TRIALS.

AGNES THOMAS proved, as they feared she would, a very black sheep. Pride led her into doubt, doubt into sin. Alone with her youthful husband, she could not help saying what she thought of Prince, which was sometimes far from pleasant to Prince's friend. Thomas, who seemed to love her, listened to her voice. She kept him away from Weymouth, to which Prince had gone back; and when his leader, growing jealous of her power, took up his pen and wrote,—"Brother Thomas, I command you to arise, and come to Weymouth, Amen," she persuaded him to disobey, at least for a time, and to go off on a visit to his mother at Llandilo. But her power was not equal to that of Prince. Thomas went back to Weymouth, carrying his wife along with him to what was anything for her but an abode of love. Harriet and Clara were

there with their husbands, Price and Cobbe; as were also Starky and his wife. These saints met together in the drawing-room, when Agnes was brought before them on a charge of seeking to withdraw her husband from Prince. Every voice condemned her; the voices of her sisters most of all. When the others had said their worst, Prince added on behalf of the Holy Spirit: "If you dare attempt to influence your husband again, in acting contrary to my commands, God will crush you out of the way." Thomas, her husband, then declared his will. "Agnes," he said, "I command you to obey henceforth the Spirit of God in me, made known to me through the Servant of the Lord." Abashed and broken, she retired to her room.

Soon after this time, she became aware that efforts were being made to induce her younger sister, only forty years old, to come in. She thought of writing to Louisa, and began a letter of friendly counsel; but her note was found in her room, and shown to Prince, on which there was a further scene. At night, on Agnes going to her bedroom, she found Thomas standing in the doorway. "You are lost," he said in effect; "you enter here no more; there is an

empty room; go in and find such rest as you deserve—you who have crossed the Servant of the Lord." Agnes felt in that moment as though her heart would break.

Prince and his male disciples went away from Weymouth to Spaxton, where the works of repair and reconstruction were advancing at a rapid rate. Wings were being added to the house; the gardens were being laid out afresh.

While the Saints were at Spaxton, a tattling servant brought the news to Prince that Sister Agnes was in the way which is said to be desired by ladies who love their lords. The chief was furious. "This comes," he groaned, "of sin. She is faithless, she is fallen; she must be cast away."

At first, it seems to have been a question whether all the sisters should not share her fate. Reports arrived in Weymouth that not one of the three ladies would see her husband any more. Harriet and Clara were incensed against their sister; perhaps they sought, through hardness towards her, to melt the heart of their husbands' friend. At length came news from Thomas, written in Spaxton, from the Abode of Love, that Agnes should pack up her things and go away from Belfield Terrace; first to his mother at Llandilo; after-

wards to her own mother at Rosehill. Thomas came to her no more.

In her mother's house the poor lady found a home; there her son George was born; and there she continued to reside until the lad was four years old, when Starky made an effort to carry him away. This effort being resisted, an action was brought, when the mother's right to have the training and society of her child was fully established by a court of law.

But these trials of Agnes did not save her sister Louisa from casting in her portion with the saints. She came down to Spaxton on a visit; and the big house being still in the builder's hands, she lodged within the grounds, at Waterman's cottage, with Julia Prince. These two ladies were alone one day in their room, when three gentlemen — Edward Nottidge, the Rev. Pepys Nottidge, and Frederick Peter Ripley — broke into the house by the back-door, forced themselves into Louisa's room, and said they had come to fetch her away. They told her first that her mother was ill, and had sent for her. She declined to go. They then seized her by the waist and forced her into a coach, which they had brought round to the front, she fighting and screaming until

the carriage was out of sight. Telling people she was mad, they got her to London, near which they locked her up in an asylum for the insane. For eighteen months she was kept under lock and key, no one at Spaxton knowing where she was confined, until she escaped from her keepers, and found refuge in a family hotel in Cavendish Square. Cobbe came up to see her, and as she desired to go back to Charlinch, they started to return by rail, when one of the madhouse messengers caught them on the platform, and carried his captive back again to her cage.

Louisa protested that her kinsmen only followed her for her money; and declared that as soon as she could gain her freedom, she would give it away, so as to disarm their malice of its motive power.

Having found her hiding-place, Cobbe, who knew that his sister-in-law was not insane, applied to the Commissioners of Lunacy. An inquiry was made, Barry Cornwall wrote a report, and the patient was discharged.

Louisa now went back to Spaxton; but before her arrival at the cottage, she took measures to transfer the whole of her property to Prince. Like the money of her sisters, it went into the Abode

of Love; in which place Louisa lived very happily until her death, when her sisters laid her, as their manner is, beneath the grass.

It was after this rape of Louisa, that the brethren, not being men of war, introduced a couple of bloodhounds into the yards of their dwelling.

CHAPTER XXXII.

THE GREAT MYSTERY.

THE day for the Great Manifestation at length had come.

"You say the day of grace is past, the day of judgment come?" I asked Prince, in one of our conversations.

"Do not mistake my words," said Beloved; and Zoe besought me with her beaming orbs that I would not misconceive her master's meaning. Then Prince explained to me in many a vague and winding phrase, that the day of grace, as the word is used by him and his disciples, means the dispensation of grace. Most men mean, I fancy, by the day of grace, a day in which the soul can be saved; missing which day, it is lost for ever. But such, Prince begged me to take note, is not his use of that awful phrase.

In the words of Zoe's Beloved, five great covenants have been made between God and

man: the first with Adam, the second with Noah, the third with Abraham, the fourth with Jesus, the fifth and last with Prince. The time during which a covenant keeps its force, is called a dispensation. Each dispensation has had a special purpose and an appropriate name. The covenant made with Abraham brought in the dispensation of the law, that with Jesus the dispensation of grace. Therefore, when Beloved announces that the day of grace is past, he means to say that the reign of Jesus has been succeeded by that of Prince.

"In me," said my host, with solemn gravity, "you behold the Love of God. Look on me. I am one in the flesh with Christ. In me the Holy Spirit has slain the devil's life. I died to God, and was renewed in the Spirit to do His work. By me, and in me, God has redeemed all flesh from death, and brought the bodies of breathing men into the resurrection state."

"Do not most of our churches," I remarked, "appear to hold this doctrine of a future life in the body?"

"We hold it," said Prince, "of the present life. God's purposes are now fulfilled, and man is no longer a thrall of languor, pain, and death.

The earth itself is raised. Jesus came into the world to destroy the devil's work in the soul; I came to destroy it in the flesh."

"Has that design been carried out?"

"It has."

"In the Abode of Love?"

"In God's own time and way it was accomplished; not in secret, with folded doors; but in open day, before clouds of witnesses."

"We are his witnesses!" cried the First and Second of the Anointed Ones.

"We are his witnesses!" echoed Sister Ellen and Sister Annie. I am not certain whether Zoe spoke this time; I fancy not.

"In that Manifestation of His love," said Prince, "God became reconciled to man, and flesh was redeemed for ever, even as the soul had been redeemed of old."

In the whole history of this people there is nothing so hard for me to describe in homely phrase for men and women who are not saints by profession, as their mysterious rite of reconciliation. It may be only fear that checks my pen. The brothers and sisters seem to have no sharp sense of that which appears to me so wild and strange. Confessing that what they have

seen was a deep mystery to them, like many other things which belong to grace and peace, they will not own that there is cause for any good man's nature being shocked by what they have to tell. Both Sister Ellen and Sister Annie spoke to me freely of their feelings in this matter; they had known the parties engaged in it; they had been present when the act was done; they had seen what came of it; in truth, they had been witnesses in the affair from first to last; yet they evidently felt no shame in the transaction, and could not be made to see how the world could have any right to blame a deed through which it had obtained the hope of everlasting life. Starky and Thomas both declared to me that as clergymen and men of honour, they could see no wrong in that which had been done, though they allowed that the case might be so presented to a Gentile as to be made a stumbling-block in his path. Their trouble was, not that the Great Manifestation had taken place in the Abode of Love, but that it had failed to exhibit the whole series of beautiful phenomena which had been expected from it by them, if not by Brother Prince.

In order to complete the great work of reconciling the fallen creature to the Holy One, it

was made known that Prince, the servant of the Lord, after he had died in his own person to the flesh, and had been raised again to life in the spirit, should take flesh upon himself once more, in the name and by the power of God, so that God might know the creature, and the creature know God, in the flesh; and thus the whole order of living men might be saved—their bodies, like their souls; the whole man being purged from sin, received into grace, and fused into the Holy One for ever.

To this end, a virgin must be found; a bride of the Lamb; young, beautiful, and pure.

Now, among the converts whom Prince had called together in the ball-room of the Royal Hotel, Weymouth, there had been a lady named Paterson. Her husband was dead, having left her, young and a widow, with money and a little girl. Was that girl the woman of beaming eyes whom I knew in the Agapemone as Sister Zoe?

When the exodus of saints had taken place from Weymouth, the widow and child had come over with Beloved and his male and female partners in salvation to Spaxton, where they had been lodged by Prince, when the houses were made ready for his children in the Abode of Love. Here

the mother, not being perfect I suppose, had [redacted] and been put away beneath the turf, leaving [redacted] orphan girl to the Saints, unaware of the great fa[redacted] that her little child was to be the chosen Mary [redacted] the final dispensation of this world. But so [redacted] was, according to the testimony given to me b[redacted] Sister Ellen, by the Angel of the Seventh Trumpe[redacted] and by the Two Anointed Ones.

"It was a very tender and solemn time," saic Sister Ellen to me, "the most tender and solemn time we have ever known. Great things have been done in this Abode; the Lord has been with us often, wrestling mightily with our spirits; but I have never felt so strange a joy and wonder as I felt in that hour."

There seems to have been much reading, prayer, and singing; for every one expected some great thing to happen, and no one knew exactly what might come to pass. Prince gave out that by the power of God he was about to take a virgin, as it were, to wife; marrying her as the groom is married to the bride; not in fear and shame, in a secret place and with folded doors, but openly, in the light of noon, in the presence of all his male and female saints. He said it was the will of God, that he should take this virgin of his own

[redacted]n, by his own sovereign right; consulting no [redacted] least of all the object of his choice. He did [redacted]t say which lady he would take. Thus it be[redacted]oved the virgins to be ready, since no one could [redacted]retend to say when the bridegroom would arrive. [redacted]fter sealing her to himself by a kiss, he was [redacted]) live towards her, to cherish her, to keep her [redacted]ear him, so that the celestial spirit and the thing of clay should grow into each other, and become one for evermore in body and in soul. Who was to be this new Madonna?

The luxurious hall in which the First Anointed One received me at my first coming to Spaxton,—that hall with the red carpet, the billiard-boards, the cosy sofas, the stained-glass windows, everywhere adorned, in silk, in paint, in oak, with the mysterious symbols of strength and love, the Lion and the Lamb,—was made the scene of this marriage of the spirit and the flesh. A day was set apart for the saving act; brethren and sisters were called in from their several rooms; anthems were sang; and then Beloved stood forth, and told them of the purposes of God. The world, he said, was only saved on the spirit-side. The earth itself was not yet saved. The Gospel had redeemed the soul from death; but it had left the

body subject, as of old, to the curse. The time to expel the devil and restore the earth to God had come. Light and clay were to join in marriage; heaven and earth were to rejoice in love. A new heaven had been already made; a new earth was now to be created, equal to that new heaven in beauty and in splendour. In fine, the Holy Spirit had come, as a bridegroom cometh to his bride,—had come in him, the Beloved; not in the body as sinful clay, but in the body as glorified spirit; had come to the end that God might have a tabernacle in which to dwell, and in which He could make Himself known to living men *on earth.*

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE FINAL DISPENSATION.

No one knew as yet whom the Servant of the Lord would choose as his bride in these spiritual nuptials. Prince wishes it to be thought that he had no part—that is to say, consciously, as a man,—in this awful rite. He felt no sting of preference in his veins. For many years he had lived the life of a monk. Self was dead in him. As his habit had been from his college days, he threw himself upon the spirit, not thinking of his own desire, but willing to be spent for God. And this idea of his own unconsciousness, his way of doing what was done that day conveyed to others; for Sister Ellen told me, that after watching him go through this scene with close, yet reverent eyes, she felt sure that when he came into the room he did not know what he was about to say and do. Be that either true or false, he

walked up to the orphan girl, Miss Paterson, took her hand in his, and gave her the bridal kiss, asserting as he did so that his union with her was a mark of God's love for the flesh,—for that earth into which He had breathed the breath of life, and for all the saints who stood about, as being men alive in the flesh.

No forms of law were used, or could be used, in these mystic nuptials. Madonna was the bride, —she could not safely be called a wife ten yards from a public road while Julia Starky, now Mrs. Prince, was still alive. Indeed, from Prince's own words, it may be seen that she was wooed and won as hardly ever virgin had been wooed and won, except by the pagan gods.

"Thus the Holy Ghost took flesh in the presence of those whom He had called as flesh.

"He took it in *free grace.* It was flesh that knew not God, that wanted not God, that was ignorant of Him; and, like all other flesh in its nature, contrary to the Spirit. He took it as it was—ignorant, indifferent, independent, at enmity against God, and having nothing to commend it to Him.

"He took it in *love.* Not because it loved Him,

for it did not; but because it pleased Him to set His love upon it. And though he took it in absolute power and authority, without consulting its pleasure, or even giving it a choice, yet He took it in love."

Julia, Prince's wife by ordinance of the Church, was present in the room, when these new bridals were being gone through, and made no sign of her dissent from what was being done. Starky, her brother, was also present, and he made no sign. "I know that what was done was right and holy in the Lord," he said to me when I could get him to speak of it. "You must be sure," he said, "that I am quite sincere in my belief, for my salvation rests upon the truth of what I say. If I am wrong, my punishment will be endless torment in the fires of hell. Can I afford to lodge one doubt within my breast?"

As to the new Madonna, who had never dreamt of this coming trial of her faith, she bowed her head, I am told, like an obedient child, and gave up her heart to the Holy Spirit. She neither wished for this glory, nor put it from her when it came. She was passive in the Spirit's hand, as clay in that of a potter, who moulds it into any shape he wills.

But the change in her condition was great, although she knew it not. Under these bridals her nature was sublimed; her soul became free; her body was cleansed from taint. The world had now died in her and for her; she could do anything she liked; but her heart was pure, and she could never sin any more.

Some of the Brethren, hard of belief, were heard to murmur at these rites. They thought such things unfit for saintly eyes and ears, and they expressed some doubts whether they could be done, even in an Abode of Love, without sin. Prince offered these sceptics a test; they tried it, and it failed; upsetting, as they said, the whole of their theories of a spiritual life. As Prince confessed, in agony and shame, "The Holy Ghost was denied in the new heaven and the new earth." When Madonna Paterson, his mystic bride, began to prove herself a mortal woman, he, too, was staggered by the fact. He had persuaded himself, as well as others, that his carnal life had passed away, and when a child was born of his spiritual marriage he was overthrown by grief and shame.

"You would have wept tears of blood for him," said Sister Ellen to me, "if you had seen how

much he suffered; he who feels so keenly, and who has to bear the burthen of us all."

At last he came to see that in this cross of his life lay hidden the highest purpose of Him whose servant he had been made. This trouble was his last conflict with the devil; this unhappy child of Madonna Paterson the devil's parting gift. Henceforth, the Evil One was expelled from the redeemed and sanctified earth.

Poor little child!

Two versions of this tale have been sent out from the Agapemone—both, as it would seem, composed by Prince; one in The Redemption of the Body brought to Light, one in The Fourth Voice. The first work was called back from the public, and every copy that could be either bought or begged was burnt. "I pray you consider that book as never having been written," said Prince, when I read to him some extracts from it. But how are you to deny the thing you know? In The Fourth Voice there is no account of Madonna Paterson's child.

After this Manifestation, some of the Brethren fell away from Prince; among others, the Rev. Lewis Price and his wife Harriet. "His going away," said Starky, "was a sore trial to us, for

he left the Abode in a very bad spirit." I may add, that he took away his wife and her six thousand pounds. His going was a heavy loss.

But those who stayed behind made up in zeal for those who went away. Beloved closed in his ranks, and raised his followers into higher places than they had hitherto held in the new heaven and the new earth. Thomas and Starky were named First and Second of the Anointed Ones; Maber was named the Angel of the Last Trumpet; while William Priest, Samuel Trickey, Cornelius Voss, William Gulliford, John Brown, Josias Croad, and William Puddy, were named the Seven Witnesses who testify after the sounding of the seventh trumpet. These angels and archangels entered at once upon their active duties. Thomas and Starky in a dozen lectures explained the mystery of the Seven Stars and the Seven Golden Candlesticks. Maber blew his trumpet, and made the following declaration:—

"I declare that God has brought forth Br. Prince the glory of Jesus Christ on the earth; and that the secret of the Lord therein is his having been quickened in his mortal body by the Holy Ghost, as the seal and climax to the fulfilment

of the gospel in him: I declare, too, that Jesus Christ has acknowledged the work of His own Spirit in Br. Prince in his taking flesh, and suffering the pure for the impure, by raising him up, the man whose name is THE BRANCH, to his right hand in glory, and by giving to him the Spirit of glory."

When Angel Maber had sounded his trumpet and made his declaration, the Seven Witnesses stood forth, each in his turn saying:—

"I am a witness that in the knowledge of Jesus Christ as the SON OF MAN there is complete redemption in spirit, soul, and body from the curse of the fall: and, that you may know this mystery of God, which in other ages, or dispensations, was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now made known in Br. Prince, I send you this revelation of THE MAN CHRIST JESUS AS THE WORD MADE FLESH, as it has been given to me."

This demonstration was the last great effort of our English Mucker.

"What have you done since these trumpets were blown and these testimonies delivered?" I asked the Rev. Samuel Starky.

"Not much," he answered; "at least, not much that you would consider work. In '62 we made our last appeal; we sent, through the foreign ambassadors, a letter, each in his own tongue, to the kings and peoples of the earth, making known to all men that flesh is saved from death. If men will not hear us, what are we to do?"

"You teach?"

"No."

"Preach?"

"No."

"Write?"

"No."

"Read?"

"Not much."

"Farm?"

"No."

"Feed the poor?"

"No."

"Send out missions?"

"No."

"How do you pass the time?"

"We have no time."

"You rise at dawn, you sleep at dark; how do you employ the intervals?"

"We eat and drink, we travel, we compare our trials, we correspond with our brethren."

"Have you many brethren who belong to your society, but who are not living in the Abode?"

"Yes, many. Some in Weymouth, some in Brighton, a few in Suffolk and elsewhere; pious women, and preachers in the church; six hundred perhaps in all, many of whom are clergymen: but many are with us in the spirit, who are not so in the name."

"Do they live as you do?"

"Yes; those do so who are truly called. They live as virgins; the devil's love having been cast out of them by the power of God."

"You seek no other work?"

"We wait on God. It is not for us to force His steps. In His own time, the end will come."

And is this all? Alas for the pride of learning and devotion! A dozen ardent clergymen, smitten with the passion for saving souls, endowed with power to warn and softness to persuade, after sundry onsets with the world, run away from their posts, shut themselves up in a garden, muse and dream, surround themselves with lovely women, eat from rich tables, pretending that the passions are dead, and waiting, in the midst of

luxury and idleness, for the whole world to be damned!

Is this all?

No; not quite all: in the meantime the reverend gentlemen play a game of billiards in what was once their church.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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